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Dave Williams followed his own path building one of the coolest Tritons ever. Page 32.



PHIL HAWKINS

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ON THE WEB!

Back to Vintage Motorcycle Days!

It's been a few years since we took in the granddaddy of vintage motorcycle events, Vintage Motorcycle Days at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio, and we can't wait to head back July 6-8, 2018, to one of the coolest vintage motorcycle events on the planet. We're bringing back our VMD Ride & Show, gathering on Friday to ogle bikes before hitting the road for a lunch run, then heading back to the track to take in the rest of the weekend. Go to MotorcycleClassics.com/vmdride to learn more.



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Thinking small

Like cars, new bikes seem to keep getting bigger. Driving to work on the super slab here in the Midwest, the few bikes I see during my daily commute are usually big cruisers; either Harleys or BMWs, with the occasional V-Strom or similar thrown in. That makes a certain sense, because with the average rate of speed approaching something like 80-85mph these days, you have to have something big and fast to ride safely in those conditions. Those two elements — speed and safety — seem contradictory to some people, but if you can't keep up or get out of the way, you're definitely at higher risk.

Which probably goes a long way toward explaining what has seemed like an inexorable increase in motorcycle girth — and engine size — over the past few decades. The problem is, big, heavy bikes are harder to ride. They steer slower, often brake slower, and when they fall, they can be nigh on impossible to pick up. That last point is important, because if you like to tour solo, it's a factor worth considering when buying a new machine. Yes, there are strategies you can learn for righting a fallen leviathan like a 770-pound BMW K1600 GTL or a 937-pound (!) Harley-Davidson Road Glide Ultra, but they usually rely on the rider actually being fit, which is not always the case.

Motorcyclists are often horsepower obsessed, but there's a simple way to get more, and that's with less. "Less weight equals increased performance, gas mileage and riding fun," opines fellow weight-watcher Brian Slark of the Barber Motorsports Museum, who says he doesn't look at horsepower anymore when looking at a new bike. "Every bike has enough power. But weight becomes more important as we age. Anything over 500 pounds is out. Four hundred, thinking about it. Three hundred, definitely interested. The new Bonneville is nudging 500, the original about 400, that's a huge difference."

Yet there are some positive signs in the market. Over just the past few years, small-bore, high-performance singles and twins from Honda and Kawasaki, in particular, have been grabbing attention, but even they seem to be trending toward bigger and heavier. Kawasaki's pint-sized performer, the EX250, was a perennial slow seller in the U.S. before morphing into the slightly larger — and heavier — EX300, now around 365 pounds dry versus the earlier EX250 at around 335 pounds dry. Yes, top speed went up, and so did, impressively, fuel economy, but the rider now has another 30 pounds to wrestle, which demands the extra horsepower.

Attending this year's 10th Annual The Quail Motorcycle Gathering in Monterey, California, friend Stewart Ingram, a lover of small European singles from the Fifties and Sixties (check out his incredible 1961 DKW Hummel on Page 38) loaned me his 2016 Ducati Scrambler — oops, my bad, Scrambler Ducati — to ride from his place in San Francisco to Monterey. By current standards, the 73 horsepower output of its 803cc engine is considered only average, but its claimed weight, 389 pounds dry, puts it at the light end of the spectrum for modern 750cc to 1,000cc motorcycles. Suzuki's V-Strom 650 weighs in at around 475 pounds, ditto Kawasaki's cool new Z900RS, and Yamaha's XSR900 comes in around 430 pounds. Except for a light-switch sensitive throttle, the Ducati was lovely, agile and easy to ride, just the thing for blasting down the California coast. It's heartening to see a mid-sized machine that seems to eschew the bigger-is-better template, and Ducati has just introduced an even lighter 399cc version, along with a 30-pound-heavier 1,100cc model. If American tastes hold true, the latter will probably be their biggest seller.

Richard Backus
Editor-in-chief



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“Are you telling me ... you only have two?”

Redemption? Misjudged?

I was lucky enough to attend the 2017 Barber Vintage Festival and go by the *Motorcycle Classics* booth and show. While there, I saw all of the beautiful Nortons and bikes there for judging. Everyone in the crowd was stunned by the beautiful Honda 836CR. I heard what Mr. Cathcart said about the 836CR and was surprised. He told the builder/owner to “bring it back next year when it had more miles on it.” What does that mean? Bring it back when it is dirty, shows more wear, and has some dings and scratches? Ridiculous.

I was in one of my local bookstores and was surprised to see the Honda 836CR on the cover. Redemption/misjudged? I am so pleased to see Mr. Boone and Bill get the recognition that they so well deserve. Two out of three of the judges were English. So what do you think?

S.T. Mills/McCalla, Alabama

S.T.,

I wouldn't be so hard on Mr. Cathcart; he likes his specials well-worn, and by now the 836CR probably is! — Ed.

Remembering Perry

It was with much sadness that I discovered Perry Bushong's passing when reading the May/June issue of *Motorcycle Classics* and the article on the 1975 MV Agusta. During many of my cross-country treks aboard my BMW in the 1970s, I would visit with Perry and his wife, Merry, do some maintenance and drool over the variety of machines that were sitting around his shop, including the 750 MV. On one occasion Perry was delivering such a machine to its new owner, and if I remember correctly, Mark offered to let me ride his MV, which I politely refused as I was nervous at the thought of dropping that work of art. On that occasion I remember watching the uncrating of a Laverda SFC outside the shop with a small crowd of Perry's friends. Perry and his wife were real gems, and the people who appreciated what he offered were a great bunch of characters. Perry once took me around the streets of Haltom City, Texas, in a newly built sidecar outfit that gave me an interesting

perspective of life. Thank you for producing such a fine magazine and printing that article.

Robert A. Krause /Grand Junction, Colorado

Variety

Backus! Are you telling me you're sitting there as the editor-in-chief of a classic motorcycle magazine and you only have two motorcycles? You mean to tell me you got no Honda, you got no Suzuki, no Yamaha, no Kawasaki? You mean to tell me you don't even have a Harley-Davidson or new Indian? Life is a long and winding road, ride it! P.S.: I don't blame you for not having a piece of junk Ducati, LOL!

Andy (Joe Dirt) Ader/via email

Andy,

Actually, I have a couple other bikes, but they're smaller (Moto Guzzi V50II, Suzuki GT185 and a Honda Express moped!) and the Laverda and the BMW are my favorites for putting on real miles. And gee, hate to let you down, but the only reason I don't have a Ducati is because I haven't found the right (read: cheap) Ducati Paso! — Ed.

Legends

The March/April issue of *Motorcycle*



A new reader

I just got my first issue from my new subscription. Your publication was suggested to me by a friend after I vented some displeasure about the recent changes to *Cycle World*. I subscribed to CW for more years than I care to discuss, probably in their first year. Congrats on capturing the essence of a great magazine. I thought you would like to see my 1966 TR6R. Before you ask, yes, that is a 2011 Triumph in back.

Dan Spannraft/via email

Classics was full of real motorcycles. The Velocette Roarer Replica and the Porcupine are fabulous. I'd seen Percy Tait's Triumph on circuits in the U.K., but I never realized so much development had gone into the bike. John L. Stein's *It Don't Come Easy* article sure didn't! The amazing amount of mechanical work done showed true American spirit. And the super article about the Classic TT and the Isle of Man, very apt with the TT coming up (That Levenson sure gets around). Derek “Nobby” Clark — what an interesting life he had. Nobby, like Vittorio Carrano and Giovanni Fumagalli, was as much a legend as the riders and bikes he looked after.

Steve Barratt/via email

Enough is enough

I am advising of my cancellation of my subscription to *Motorcycle Classics* magazine. I am tired of your attempts to shove European bikes down my throat. Japanese bikes have been my life since I was a kid here in Southern California. I thought *Cycle World* was bad with the Harley-Davidson/Victory scheme, but you guys are worse in ignoring front cover Japanese machines. All the above will be your downfall, I guarantee that. Especially here in California. What good are those fancy illustrations of bikes I can't identify with!

Manuel Beltran/via email

Manuel,

The Honda on the March/April cover wasn't Japanese? We love Japanese bikes; they're what we learned to ride on. — Ed.

Another green BMW

I bought a Metallic Green BMW R75/5 from my brother. I had it for about five years and sold it to a guy here in Wichita, Kansas. The only thing I didn't like about it was the brakes, but otherwise it was a nice bike. I've had a 1981 R65 and a 1983 R100RT since. The R65 was the absolute favorite of all my bikes (1941 Indian Chief, 1983 Harley Sportster XLS and numerous Hondas). I quit riding last year (I'm 78), but will ride again as soon as I find another bike I really like!

Ken Schmidt/Wichita, Kansas

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Game Changer: 1986-1987 Suzuki GSX-R750

"Sportbikes will soon be divided into two categories: before the GSX-R and after," gushed *Cycle World* in March 1985 of Suzuki's new hyper bike.

What made it so special? It was the lightest bike in its class by a country mile. When *Cycle* magazine compared the latest batch of 750s in July 1986, they recorded full-tank curb weights of 505 pounds for Honda's VFR750, 524 pounds for Yamaha's FZ750, and just 465 pounds for the Gixxer. Suzuki claimed a dry weight of 388 pounds versus 489 pounds for the GS750 it replaced, the engine alone being 24 pounds lighter.

Designer Etsuo Yokouchi was obsessed with minimizing mass, so he decided on air/oil cooling rather than adding water jackets, a radiator and a pump. By 1986, though, he was swimming against the tide. The Other Three had all switched their premium 750 sport bikes to liquid cooling. Yokouchi chose instead to rely on a high-volume, low-pressure pump to circulate up to 10 liters of oil per minute through the cylinder head, using fins and a king-size oil cooler to dissipate heat. Bottom end lubrication and piston-cooling oil jets were fed by a conventional high-pressure pump.

Though based on the GS, the GSX-R engine used lighter components throughout. A bore increase from 67mm to 70mm and shorter stroke allowed higher revs for the same piston speed, and larger valves for more power. Dual overhead camshafts were driven by a central chain and the cam box was capped with a magnesium cover. Four 29mm Mikuni carburetors fed revised 4-valve Twin Swirl Combustion Chambers (TSCC), with a 4-into-1 exhaust. Drive to the 6-speed transmission was by straight-cut gears and a wet multiplate clutch.

Yokouchi's minimalism extended to the lightweight aluminum tube frame, which owed much to the GS1000R endurance racer. It featured Suzuki's Full Floater single-shock rear suspension



(adjustable for preload and rebound damping), aluminum swingarm, and preload-adjustable 41mm Kayaba front fork. Eighteen-inch cast aluminum wheels with triple disc brakes ran on radial tires.

So how did the GSX-R stack up against the competition? Though the lightest of the 750 superbikes, the Gixxer was also the least powerful, recording 79.26 horsepower on *Cycle*'s dyno, while Honda's VFR clocked 82 horsepower and Yamaha's 5-valve FZ topped 85. On the strip, though, the bikes performed similarly, with all three in the 11.1-second range at around 121mph for the standing quarter in *Cycle World*'s comparo. The same magazine took the 750s to Willow Springs Raceway: Though the Gixxer recorded the slowest time, testers blamed a flaccid stock rear shock and recommended an aftermarket replacement.

Suzuki had established a reputation for quality and durability with their air-cooled fours. Would the extra performance and lighter weight of the GSX-R750 come at the cost of reliability? *Cycle World* took a couple of Gixxers to Uniroyal's 5-mile banked test track in Laredo, Texas, and ran them for 24 hours, setting a new endurance speed record, averaging 128.3mph including fuel and tire stops.

Taking it to the street, *Cycle World* found the GSX-R was "wonderfully competent in most performance categories," but

ON THE MARKET

1986 Suzuki GSX-R750/Sold for \$5,000



It may have just been bad timing on our part, but our online search for a 1986-1987 Gixxer turned up just one in the U.S., and another in the U.K. The U.S. listing on cycletrader.com was a first-year 1986 model with 19,000 miles and offered for \$5,000 (at left). The seller claimed it was a solid running "99 percent stock original bike," and the photos supported that claim. The original paint looked very good and the stock blue seat was clean and free of any tears or evident wear, suggesting a bike that's been well cared for. The U.K. bike was a 1987 model offered by bridgemoto.co.uk for £4,495, or approximately \$6,300. A recent import from Japan, it showed just over 18,000 kilometers, or around 11,200 miles. It looked good, but there was minor scuffing on the muffler guard (likely from transporting) and surface oxidation on the fork legs. The paint and stock blue seat appeared to be original and there were no indications of modifications or accident damage. Regardless, the U.S. bike was cheaper, and from what we could tell in better condition. For the money, we think the buyer did well.

"Suzuki's new GSX-R750 is a race bike with lights."

SUZUKI GSX-R750

Years produced	1986-1987
Power	106hp (claimed), 79hp @10,500rpm (measured RWHP)
Top speed	142mph (period test)
Engine	749cc (70mm x 48.7mm) air/oil-cooled, 16-valve DOHC inline four
Transmission	6-speed, chain final drive
Weight/MPG	388lb dry (claimed); 465lb w/full tank (period test)/35mpg (avg.)
Price then/now	\$4,499 (1986)/\$3,000-\$6,500

cautioned, "It simply is not a very good street bike." *Cycle* magazine concurred: "The seating position that lets the Suzuki work so well at the racetrack and in the canyons cannot translate comfortably to highway use. Arms tire quickly, legs cramp up," they said. *Cycle World's* testers also found the bars too low, the pegs too high, and the steering heavy with the narrow clip-on bars. "The Suzuki's top-weighted powerband requires concentration on gear selection as well," they said. *Cycle* magazine's tester perhaps summed it up best:

"Suzuki's new GSX-R750 is a race bike with lights." Ergonomics aside, *Cycle* magazine strongly endorsed Suzuki's approach to avoidupois, noting that lighter weight also meant other major components — suspension, brakes, drivetrain — were less stressed. "The Suzuki GSX-R750 is running proof that validates the low-mass approach to high-performance motorcycling," they said. Its significance in sportbike

development was also recognized by *Cycle Guide*, which awarded it Motorcycle of the Year in 1987. **MC**

CONTENDERS Sporting alternatives to the first GSX-R

1985-1991 Yamaha FZ750

Were five valves better than four? Yamaha thought so, fitting three intake and two exhaust valves to its FZ750. The 20-valve Genesis engine churned out 85.3 horsepower at 11,500rpm on *Cycle's* dyno. It also tore up the quarter-mile strip in 11.4 seconds at 117mph in their 1985 test. "It's hard to conceive of this level of power from an over-the-counter 750 engine," *Cycle's* editors said, adding, "The engine is remarkably tractable, too."

The drivetrain slotted into a square-section steel tube perimeter frame with the cylinders canted forward at 45 degrees. An air-adjustable Kayaba front fork with 39mm fork tubes controlled the 120/80 x 16-inch front tire by a steep 25.5-degree rake, while a single, multi-adjustable spring/damper unit and swingarm held the 130/80 x 18-inch rear. Triple discs provided braking.

Cycle Guide's tester found that, in spite of the steep steering angle and 16-inch front wheel, the FZ750 was slower to turn at moderate speeds, but was more nimble when pushed hard, and had "rock-solid stability." Testers also found the FZ's handling to be sensitive to front fork air pressure, rear preload/damping settings and tire pressures. Said *Cycle*, "(The FZ750) offers class-

leading horsepower and possesses superb handling as well as composure and feel." "It's the blueprint for sport bikes of the future," concluded *Cycle Guide*.

- 1985-1991
- 85hp @ 11,500rpm (period test)/140mph (period test)
- 749cc liquid-cooled 20-valve DOHC inline four
- 6-speed, chain final drive
- 524lb (wet)/30-50mpg
- \$4,599 (1985)/\$1,500-\$4,500



1986-1989 Honda VFR750F

Though derived from the 1983 VF750F, Honda's 1986 VFR750F was pretty much all new — except the bore and stroke. The most significant change was from chain-drive to gear-driven cams, intended to assure punters that the valvetrain issues of the VF750 would not recur.

The new engine was physically smaller, lighter, more powerful (thanks to better breathing), and more reliable because of improved oiling and revised valve operation — each valve was opened by its own cam lobe and rocker versus the paired setup on the earlier engine. The transmission went from five gears to six. The revised drivetrain went into an aluminum perimeter beam frame (instead of steel on the VF) as a stressed member. The chassis was fitted with an anti-dive fork with 110/90 x 16-inch front tire and adjustable single-shock swingarm with a 130/80 x 18-inch rear tire.

The new VFR became the pacesetter in its class, recording a best standing quarter in the low 11s at 120mph in *Cycle Guide's* test. It was also fastest around Willow Springs in *Cycle Guide's* 750-class comparo. The same magazine called it "the best sporting 750 in the world," awarding it Motorcycle of the Year for 1986.

- 1986-1989
- 106hp (claimed), 82.5hp @ 10,500rpm (measured RWHP)/144mph
- 748cc liquid-cooled 16-valve DOHC 90-degree V4
- 6-speed, chain final drive
- 505lb (wet)/33-55mpg
- \$5,298 (1986)/\$1,500-\$4,500



Alan Cathcart joins our PA Getaway and remembering Mike Hailwood

Alan Cathcart joins *Motorcycle Classics* for the 3rd Annual PA Getaway

Alan Cathcart, unquestionably one of the — if not the — best-known motorcycle journalists in the world, will join us as our special guest for the 3rd Annual *Motorcycle Classics* Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Seven Springs, Pennsylvania, Aug. 10-12, 2018.

A recipient of the Guild of Motoring Writers Journalist of the Year Award, Cathcart, a longtime motorcycle enthusiast who started out pursuing a career in law and then working in the travel industry, has been an influential voice in motorcycling since diving head first into the scene as a journalist and test rider in the 1980s.

An accomplished rider who's raced against some of the best at circuits including Daytona and the Isle of Man, Cathcart started racing in 1974, aboard a Ducati 350 single. A winner of the Sound of Thunder World Series, he also raced for Yamaha, at the same time building his career as one of motorcycling's foremost journalists. His abilities behind the handlebars and the typewriter have earned him an enviable reputation, with invitations to ride everything from modern factory race bikes to historic vintage machines. A moving force in the British vintage bike scene, Sir Alan, as he's fondly called thanks to his British background and impeccable manners, continues to ride and test both new and vintage machines to this day, a job he's not likely to give up soon.

A regular contributor to *Motorcycle Classics*, Cathcart also helps with judging at our vintage bike show at the annual Barber Vintage Festival, and we're thrilled that he's happily agreed to join us for this year's Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway.

We'll kick things off on Friday evening with a welcome reception and dinner, then rest up for the Saturday ride. After

a full breakfast on Saturday morning, we'll head north to the historic city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a steel-industry town that at one time out-produced better-known industry leaders including Pittsburgh and Cleveland, Ohio. An 1889 flood devastated the city, but its steel industry rebounded.

Saturday's ride will see us riding down amazing back roads from Seven Springs to Johnstown, entering from the West for a lunch stop at the famous Johnstown

the area's two-lane blacktop roads. Back at Seven Springs, we'll gather for a post-ride banquet dinner, with Cathcart joining editor Richard Backus for what's certain to be an entertaining and informative discussion of Cathcart's amazing career in the motorcycle industry as racer, test rider and journalist.

We'll gather again for breakfast on Sunday morning, then head back out on the road for another beautiful ride through the surrounding Laurel Highlands. We

hope to offer two routes on Sunday, a shorter one for folks who need to leave early and a longer one for those with a little more time to kill before heading home.

Need a bike? Ride sponsor RetroTours has a limited selection of classic 1970s motorcycles available for rent, including bikes from Ducati, Triumph, Norton, Yamaha, Honda, BMW and more. Check out the 25-strong stable at retrotours.com, but don't wait too long, because rentals are available on a first come, first served basis. Want to pile on even more miles? RetroTours will lead a 600-mile round-trip tour to Seven Springs from its headquarters in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, through the seemingly forgotten back-country of Maryland, West

Virginia and Pennsylvania.

We'll also be joined by our good friends at Bonhams Auctions (bonhams.com), Federal Motorcycle Transport (funtransport.com), Pecard Motorcycle Leather Care (pecard.com) and Spectro Performance Oils (spectro-oils.com), passionate motorcycle enthusiasts and enthusiastic sponsors of our annual ride. Reserve your spot now at MotorcycleClassics.com/PA2018, where you'll also find updates and interactive ride routes as we get them posted. See you there!



From left: Editor Richard Backus and son, Charlie, with Andrew Cathcart and his dad, Alan Cathcart, special guest at this year's Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway, Aug. 10-12, 2018.

Incline, followed by a ride on the incline. Built in 1891 and billed as the world's steepest vehicular inclined plane, the 897-foot-long incline has a 70.9 percent grade. A 400 horsepower electric motor pulls two cars, counter-weighted to balance out the load on the motor, one car going up while the other goes down. It's an incredible piece of vintage technology and the views of Johnstown and the Conemaugh River valley are amazing.

After lunch we'll head back to Seven Springs, taking a different but no less beautiful route, winding our way along

40 years ago: Mike "The Bike" Hailwood's Isle of Man comeback

Forty years ago, Mike "The Bike" Hailwood made one of motorcycle racing's most famous career comebacks. Following an 11-year hiatus from motorcycle racing, Hailwood, who had switched to Formula 1 car racing, decided to return to the Isle of Man, where he had first ridden as an 18-year-old in 1958, to take another stab at winning on one of his favorite circuits. Given his long absence from motorcycle racing, he was considered by many a long shot to win, but win he did, coming in first in the 1978 Isle of Man Formula 1 race aboard Steve Wynne's Sports Motorcycles Ducati 900SS.

Hailwood had actually quit car racing following a bad crash at the Nürburgring in 1974. In an interview with motorcycle journalist Alan Cathcart, Wynne said that Hailwood's re-entry into two-wheeled racing came about after a chance meeting at Silverstone, where Wynne had one of his Ducatis. According to Wynne, Hailwood threw a leg over the Ducati and said, "This is the kind of old-fash-

ioned bike I understand — wouldn't mind doing another TT on this!" Wynne basically said, "why not," and after a brief discussion and a handshake — followed later by a contract for a mere £1,000 (roughly \$1,900 U.S.) — Hailwood's victorious return was set in motion.

Already a legend for his race-winning years riding for MV Agusta and others, Hailwood's win permanently etched his name into the history books as the greatest motorcycle racer of all time. He raced the Isle one more time, in 1979, before retiring for good at age 39, leaving behind a legacy of 76 Grand Prix wins, 14 Isle of Man victories and nine World Championships.

Two years later, on a Saturday afternoon, March 21, 1981, Hailwood went out for fish and chips with his two children. A delivery truck making an illegal turn struck his car, critically injuring Hailwood and killing his 9-year-old daughter instantly. Hailwood held on for two days before succumbing to massive internal injuries. The truck driver was reportedly fined £100.



Mike Hailwood on the Sports Motorcycles Ducati 900SS in 1979.

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YAMAHA TRILOGY

Greg Hageman builds a Yamaha Seca 400

Story by Greg Williams

Photos by Don Gawf Photography

Popular culture has given us more than a few great book and movie trilogies, including *Lord of the Rings*, *The Matrix* and *Mad Max* — amazing stories told over a series of three books or films — or, in some cases, both.

Twisting the metaphor slightly, Greg Hageman of Hageman Cycles (hagemanmc.com) has produced a unique motorcycle trilogy of commissioned Yamaha builds for enthusiast Mike Martens. Will Hollywood come calling? Not likely, but the first two custom Yamahas have been feature stories in *Motorcycle Classics*. The first, a 1982 Virago 920, appeared in the May/June 2012 issue, followed by a Seca 900 café racer in the May/June 2015 issue. Completing the trilogy is this now-stunning 1982 Yamaha Seca 400, a bike that Mike asked Greg to build for his girlfriend, Sally Everhart, to ride.

Seca 400

At the end of the 2015 story about the Seca 900, I wrote that Mike wanted Greg to construct a café bike based on a modern Yamaha SR400. I also mused if, in three years' time, I'd be writing a story about the build. Well, it's almost exactly three years to the day later and I'm penning the story, but it isn't about an SR400.

"We bought an SR400 for Sally," Mike explains. "She'd learned to ride when she was younger, but was just returning to the sport. It's a great bike, and the more time that we spent with it the more it seemed to me that you could work hard to make it cool, but in the end it wasn't going to be any better than it already was, and it would be a shame to cut it up."

An ardent fan of Yamahas of the late '70s and early '80s, Mike grew up during that era and has images of those

machines almost permanently etched into his brain. Back then, he'd spend hours poring over the contemporary literature, and his first motorcycle was a Yamaha 750 Seca purchased in 1982.

"I was familiar with the 400 Seca, and thought instead of doing the SR400 the Seca might be a better bike to build," Mike says. "Apart from the Atari/Tron styling of the original Seca 400, the bike has some cool elements."

Mike became aware of those "cool elements" when he saw photographs of a Seca 400 without its bodywork. That's when it dawned on him that the Seca, with its monoshock rear suspension and open frame, where the engine serves as a stressed member, was similar to how a Virago is constructed.

Greg has been dubbed "the Virago Whisperer" in the hobby thanks to his many custom Virago builds — and the subframe kits that he makes and sells that dramatically alter the appearance of these bikes — which prompted Mike to ask if he'd ever consider taking on a Seca 400.

"When Mike first started talking to me about it," Greg says, "I thought it would be such a tiny bike with a small frame. But I told him, sure, I'd do it." That affirmation set Mike in motion. He began searching for a donor Seca 400, finally finding one on Craigslist in Seattle, Washington. Not able to see it for himself, Mike hired a local motorcycle mechanic to go and inspect the machine. "He told me it must be one of the nicest examples out there," he says.







The build

Mike bought it, shipping it to his home in Kansas City, Missouri. With only 5,000 miles on the odometer, the 1982 Seca really was in fantastic condition. Mike rode it a few times, but stored the bike waiting for Greg to call, and that happened early in 2017.

At the time, Greg was living and working in Tampa, Florida (he's since relocated back home to Iowa). Mike loaded up the Seca and several parts, including about 10 gas tanks that he'd been collecting, thinking one might suit the build, and drove to Florida.

A half-day after unloading the bike and rolling it into Greg's workshop, the Seca was apart. The pair began draping tanks over the stamped steel backbone of the frame, and when the circa-1969 Yamaha DS6 tank went on, they knew something



HAGEMAN SECA 400

Engine: 399cc air-cooled DOHC parallel twin, 69mm x 53.4mm bore and stroke, 9.7:1 compression ratio, 42hp @ 9,500rpm (claimed)

Top speed: 100mph (stock, period test)

Carburetion: Two Mikuni VM34

Transmission: 6-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Pressed steel spine w/engine as stressed member/55in (1,397mm)

Suspension: 41mm telescopic forks front, mono-shock rear w/Hagon shock

Brakes: 12.6in (320mm) single disc front, 6.25in (158.8mm) SLS drum rear

Tires: 110/90 x 18in Dunlop TT100GP front, 130/80 x 18in Dunlop TT100GP rear, Borrani aluminum rims

Weight (w/half tank fuel): 357lb (163kg)

Seat height: 31.5in (800mm)

Fuel capacity: 2.9gal (11ltr)

Price then: \$1,999 (1982)

good was in the making.

Bought for just \$75 in an eBay auction, the tank was in great condition, and it offered an organic yet vintage look that was made all the better when the aftermarket made-in-China seat was propped up in position. According to Mike, Greg



The small Koso North America multi-function meter (left). Note the trick adjustable SSK clutch lever and the mirror from Halcyon Classic Parts (above).

has many of these Chinese seats in his shop and uses them as styling bucks to see what works best. He only ends up using the pan, however, getting the seat professionally re-upholstered for the final product.

Stock, the Seca 400 came with four-spoke cast mag wheels. To replace those, Greg sourced a pair of wire wheel hubs. Introduced in 1977 on the heels of the XS360 of 1976, base XS400 models were equipped with spoked wheels and Greg used one of those for the rear. The front hub is from an XV700 Virago that featured dual brake discs. Greg machined away the right side disc carrier,



The slick aftermarket LED headlight uses a glass lens and puts out a surprising throw of light.

leaving a single disc on the left. Both replacement hubs were laced to 18-inch Borrani flanged alloy rims using stainless steel spokes from Buchanan's Spoke & Rim (buchananspokes.com). Era-appropriate Dunlop TT100 tires were sourced from Japan, where Mike says they're stock fitment on Kawasaki W650s and 800s.

Up front, the stock forks yielded to a beefier set of 41mm tubes and trees from a Yamaha XJ600, complete with aluminum Euro-style Krator 7/8-inch handlebars and modern controls from a Yamaha FZ-07. The newer forks allowed Greg to run a 320mm single front disc, 53mm larger than the stock 267mm rotor. At the rear, the Seca's box-section swingarm was kept, but the suspension was upgraded with a Hagon shock meant for a Yamaha RZ350LC.

After spending a couple of days with Greg, the Seca was basically mocked up. Mike returned home, leaving Greg to continue working out many of the often-challenging details that complete a motorcycle. Those included removing the rear subframe and welding up a new tubular support for the seat. This isn't welded to the frame; rather, it's bolted in place.

To get the DS6 tank to fit over the wide backbone and to sit as far forward and as low as possible, Greg fabricated new top engine mounts. He also used a little heat and some well-placed hammer blows to re-form the tank's tunnel to fit the Seca's spine. Not a procedure for the faint of heart.

The mounts, Greg says, both on the tank and the frame, are similar to stock Yamaha fitments, but have been extensively reworked. Up front, a pair of ears on the tank slip over rubber cushions on frame stubs before a single bolt secures the tank at the back. The seat is similarly mounted, with a tab that slips into a receptor at the front, firmly secured at the rear with two 10mm nuts underneath.

Continuing to work on the front end, Greg installed a Koso North America (kostonorthamerica.com) TNT-02 multi-function meter. The instrument includes an analog tachometer and digital speed-



Meanwhile, the double-over-head cam 399cc parallel twin engine with its 9.7:1 compression ratio and 69mm x 53.4mm bore and stroke was in good health. The crankshaft throws are 180 degrees apart, and there's a counter-balancer that turns just in front of the crank to smooth out vibes.

According to an August 1982 *Cycle World* test, the engine is only 14.25 inches wide, narrower than most other Japanese models because it doesn't have an alternator rotor mounted to the end of the crank; instead, the alternator is chain driven, mounted just behind the base of the cylinders.

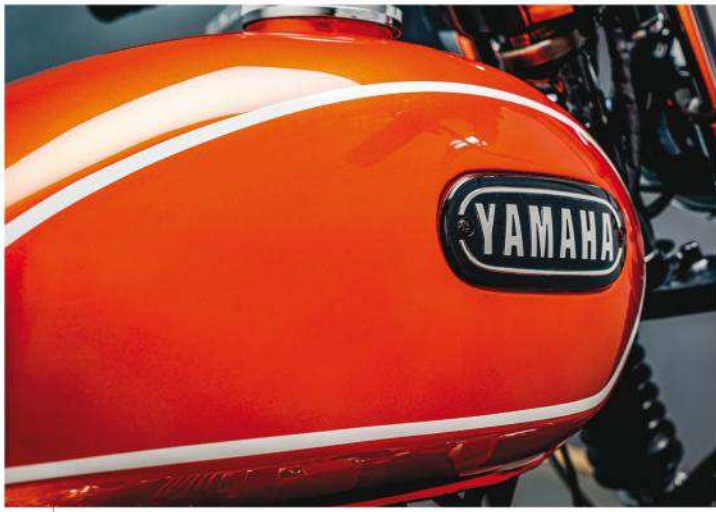
In the transmission department, Yamaha endowed the Seca 400 with six gears, with power from the crank transferred through a straight-cut gear primary to a multiplate clutch equipped with five friction and four steel plates.

Of special note is the Seca 400's YICS — Yamaha Induction Control System — cylinder head. The system, said *Cycle World*, is meant to aid "low-rpm economy and performance" by adding "a small passageway that intersects each intake port just ahead of the intake valve." What it essentially does is create pressure in

ometer, and is supported in a custom-made bracket. The 5-3/4-inch headlight is a high-quality LED unit with a glass lens made for the Harley-Davidson aftermarket. Taillights are tiny LEDs mounted into the rear legs of the swingarm to keep the back end as clean as possible, while the license plate is set vertically on the right side of the swingarm and washed in light by an LED. "Motorcycles always look better without signal lights and license plates," Mike opines, adding, "but they have to be legal."



Sally Everhart aboard the Seca 400 in the West Bottoms of Kansas City, Mo.



The circa-1969 Yamaha DS6 tank shines better than new. The LEDs built into the swingarm serve as tail, brake and blinker lights.

the opposite port, and the YICS “swirls and mixes the fuel charge in the cylinder, making it more homogenous for better burning.” The stock Seca 400 uses a pair of 34mm Mikuni constant velocity carburetors. Greg, however, opted for a pair of Mikuni VM34 round slide carbs with pod air filters.

Greg cut apart the Seca’s exhaust system, keeping only the header pipes, with a pair of 1.75-inch universal upswept mufflers from Niche Cycle Supply (nichecycle.com) adapted to fit. Mike originally wanted to take Scotchbrite to the chrome exhaust parts to give them a brushed appearance, but the header tubes were not in perfect condition. Not a fan of exhaust pipe wrap, Mike and Greg finally settled on a matte black Cerakote

ceramic finish.

The new rear subframe was powder coated gloss black to match the frame, as was the swingarm, which was originally silver. Wheel hubs, however, were coated satin black. The alloy fork sliders were polished, and Greg cleaned and detailed the engine by removing the side covers, also running them under the polishing mops. And the engine? With the side covers back on, Greg simply changed the oil and the spark plugs to return the engine to service.

When it came time to choose a paint color, Mike says Sally’s favorite hue is purple. During a visit with Greg in Tampa, both Mike and Sally suggested painting the Seca purple. Without missing a beat, Greg stared at them both and suggested

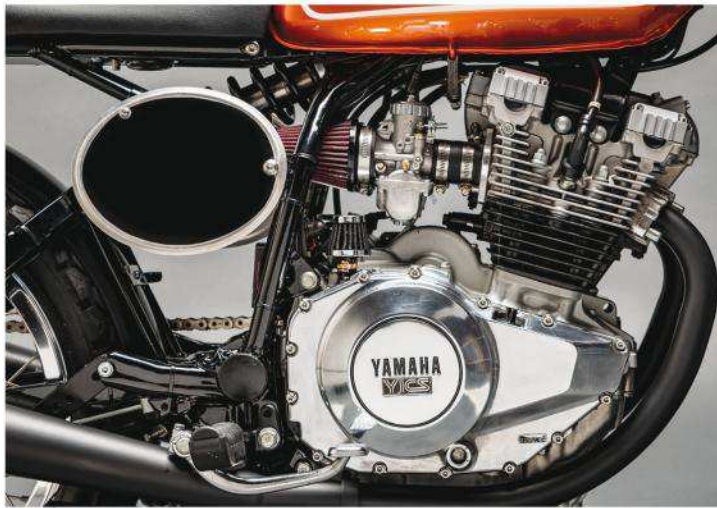
orange. And that was okay, Mike says, because Sally’s second favorite color is orange. The tank was handed to Moe Roberts of Moe Colors (moecolors.com) in Tampa, and he sprayed it in a specially mixed House of Kolers candy tangerine. Reproduction Yamaha badges and a cream pinstripe finish off the job.

“It looks great in orange,” Mike tells me during a telephone interview, and then goes silent about the color while speaking to me. A few days later, Mike calls me back: “Sorry, I couldn’t say more,” he says. “Sally was in the room, and I couldn’t tell you I am having a second Yamaha DS6 tank painted purple for her June birthday. It’s a milestone birthday, and the bike is my present to her.”

Mike continues: “It was impossible to

Thanks to the YICS system and the pod air filters, the Seca makes a sweet induction noise to match the mellow tone of the exhaust.





The 399cc parallel twin makes a claimed 42 horsepower at 9,500rpm. The monoshock can be seen behind the number plates.

make the bike a secret, because I wanted her to have creative input — she wanted the number plates, for example — but I can swap tanks out on her birthday and surprise her. If she likes the purple better, we'll run it that way. If not, I have a bunch of shelves in the garage with vintage Yamaha tanks displayed and it will rest there."

With the custom Seca back in Mike and Sally's hands, they put the machine on the scale. With a half tank of gas and full of oil, it weighs 357 pounds, about 40 to 45 pounds less than a stock Seca 400.

Also, Mike reports the machine is nicely balanced at 50/50, nearly to the pound on the front tire versus the back.

The little twin-cylinder engine likes to rev, making a claimed 42 horsepower at 9,500rpm. Mike says peak torque is at 8,000rpm and the twin will happily rev to 10,000. Thanks to the YICS system and the pod air filters, the Seca makes a very distinct induction noise, and with the exhaust modifications the resulting note is neither overly polite, nor overly loud, producing a nice, mellow tone, Mike says.

A September 1982 *Cycle* test concluded the Seca was comparable to the sport-oriented 2-stroke Yamaha RD400. "It may not have the straight-line zip of an RD," *Cycle* said, "but the Seca is a more civilized and polished motorcycle, and in the right hands, it's just as willing an accomplice as the RD when it comes to para-legal behavior on twisty roads."

Regardless of how it's ridden, this custom Seca will be a birthday present that Sally won't soon forget, and in the garage it perfectly bookends the Hageman/Martens trilogy of one-off Yamahas. **MC**

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SEVENTIES CHILD BORN IN THE EIGHTIES



Ducati 750 F1

Story and photos by Dain Gingerelli

In reality, the Ducati 750 F1 is a 1980s motorcycle, the first examples rolling out of the Borgo Panigale factory in Northern Italy in 1985. But in truth, the F1 is a child of the 1970s, its DNA traceable to blueprints originally penned by famed engineer Fabio Taglioni (aka Dr. T) for a 499cc air-cooled L-twin using a belt-drive desmodromic valve train.

That engine eventually powered Ducati's 1980 Pantah 500SL, a bike touted by *Cycle* magazine in its May 1981 issue as "the first genuinely new European bike in a long time." Of more historical consequence, though, Taglioni's design served, in various displacements, as Ducati's bread-and-butter engine platform during the coming years. As *Cycle*'s editors pointed out in their road test, the Pantah's half-liter engine "has room for further development." Their prophecy would prove to be an understatement, as we shall see.

Soon enough the little engine that could evolved beyond its original half-liter displacement, stretching like Gumby to 583cc, its combustion chambers later ballooning to 649cc of Italian power. Shortly after that, and with an eye on international endurance road





racing's 750cc class, Ducati created a 748cc version of Taglioni's 90-degree twin. That engine found a home in essentially the same remarkably taut and lightweight tubular trellis frame used for Ducati's earlier Formula Two racer that dutifully etched its mark in moto history on road race tracks the world over. Before the millennium played out the unassuming Pantah-based engine continued contorting, morphing and growing, much like the Incredible Hulk, ultimately resulting in engines for subsequent Ducati sport bike models displacing more than 900cc.

It was in road racing where Ducati originally established itself as a major player in the approaching modern era of motorcycling that would be dominated by sporty bikes boasting big-bore engines. The saga gained traction in 1972 when a British road racer, the remarkable Paul Smart, raced the stunning Ducati 750 Imola, powered by a twin-cylinder 748cc engine masterfully engineered by Dr. T, to win the Imola 200, Europe's short-lived response to America's long-established Daytona 200. Smart's win elevated Ducati into motorcycle rac-



1985 DUCATI F1

Engine: 748cc air-cooled SOHC desmodromic 90-degree V-twin, 2 valves per cylinder, 88mm x 61.5mm bore and stroke, 9.3:1 compression ratio, 75hp @ 9,000rpm (claimed)
Top speed: 137mph (period test)
Carburetion: Two 36mm Dell'Orto PHF
Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive
Electrics: 12v, Kokusan electronic ignition
Frame/wheelbase: Chrome moly trellis frame w/engine as a stressed member/55.1in (1,400mm)
Suspension: 38mm Marzocchi telescopic fork front, single Marzocchi cantilever shock w/adjustable preload and damping rear
Brakes: Dual 11in (280mm) full-floating Brembo discs front, single 10.2in (260mm) full-floating Brembo disc rear
Tires: Michelin MN48/M48 (OE; Avon Roadrider replacement on feature bike), 120/80 x 16in front, 130/80 x 18in rear
Weight (dry): 386lb (175kg)
Seat height: 29.5in (750mm)
Fuel capacity/MPG: 4.8gal (18ltr)/47-49mpg (period tests)
Price then/now: \$6,995 (1985)/\$15,000-\$25,000

ing's big league of players.

A few years later a couple of motorcycle magazine scribes — *Cycle* magazine's charismatic editor, Cook Neilson, and his ever-so-capable colleague and the magazine's then-managing editor, the late Phil Schilling — ever so patiently and painstakingly modified their own Ducati 750SS — a bike they humbly christened Old Blue — to win the 1977 Daytona Superbike race. That dynamic duo's performance, with Cook twisting the throttle and Shilling spinning the wrenches, proved that, yes, you too can become a rockin' road racing star if you race a Ducati. Their win is epic lore among Superbike aficionados.

The following year Ducati completed its 1970s trifecta of landmark wins when Mike "The Bike" Hailwood, whose name was synonymous with motorcycle road racing, made a stunning comeback following a seven-year hiatus from the sport. Competing in his first major motorcycle event since the 1971 Daytona 200, Hailwood rode a privately entered Ducati 900SS prepared by Steve Wynne's British-based shop to win — nay, conquer — the 1978 Isle of Man's Formula 1 TT race.



The 748cc engine is fed by a pair of 36mm Dell'Orto PHF carbs. Dual 11-inch Brembo brakes provide stopping power up front.

Ironically, at about that same time, the Good Doctor of Bologna was putting the finishing touches to an engine that was soon to be the Pantah project.

Enter the 750 F1

It was practically by default that Dr. T's cam-belt L-twin engine even made it into production. Following a string of masterfully engineered small-bore single-cylinder engines designed primarily by Taglioni, Ducati management felt it was time to forge onward and upward, choosing parallel twin-cylinder engines displacing 350cc and 500cc to do so. Taglioni, feeling those engines lacking in many ways, abstained from participating wholeheartedly as he had in past projects. He felt his own L-twin design with desmodromic cam/valve drive for a 500cc engine made more sense — and probably more horsepower.

History has proven Taglioni right. The parallel twins, shoehorned into quirky chassis sporting unorthodox bodywork styled by Giorgio Giugiaro, tanked in terms of sales. Mamma mia and what to do? Quick, somebody call a doctor, and fortunately, one was already in the house. To stop the bleeding, Dr. T quietly presented management a set of plans for an L-twin 500 sporting belt-driven camshafts for 2-valve heads. The move from triage to production came about in 1979 when the first Pantah was launched. Ducati was saved ... for the time being.

Of course, Italians being Italians, someone in management almost immediately got the notion to place one of Dr. T's new L-twin engines — in race-ready trim, no less — into a racing chassis, a project that was dubbed the TT2. Trusted into the capable hands of English road racer Tony Rutter, the 600cc racer captured four Formula Two world championships, from 1981-1984.

Empowered with such success, the TT2 project begat the 750cc TT1 program that eventually carried local Grand Prix hero Virginio Ferrari to the Italian Formula One championship in 1985, along with various wins in endurance racing on the world championship theater.

About this same time another player emerged as a leader in



the motorcycle industry scene. Cagiva, a privately owned motorcycle company in Northern Italy and a relatively unknown commodity on the international front, but a thriving marque in Italy, was interested in producing models powered by big-bore engines. Their solution was to contract an outside source for their engines, and that source happened to be Ducati. Cagiva ordered a variant of the Pantah 650 to fill about 6,000 frames for two new models, the Allazzurra and Elefant. That order alone essentially doubled the number of engines that Ducati normally produced for its own models.

Bad moon rising

Flush with lira, the kind folks in Bologna looked at each other and, in so many words, said, "What the heck, let's build another racer!" That model, in prototype form for what would become the 750 F1, appeared in several endurance races during the 1983 season, with ultimate success coming at Ferrari's hands with his Formula One title in 1985. That same year, Ducati produced one of the sexiest, sweetest, sharpest-looking sport bikes ever, the 750 F1 Replica. Mamma mia, indeed, but trouble still loomed over the horizon for Ducati. Even though Cagiva's engine orders helped buoy Ducati's financial woes, the Bologna-

based company continued to hemorrhage money. Rumors of a takeover persisted. Cagiva, based in Varese, Italy, and known for its rather cartoonish elephant logo, was prepared to solve Ducati's economic woes through a financial bailout. Was the new 750 F1 Replica to be Ducati's swan song?

Cycle magazine thought so. A brief article featuring the new F1 Replica appeared in the magazine's October 1985 issue, stating, "... you're likely seeing the last pure Ducati motorcycle there will be. And arguably the best." "If it is," reasoned *Cycle's* editorial crew, "Ducati certainly hasn't bowed out meekly, but rather has left us with the machine we always hoped they would build."

Nearer and dearer to readers, though, *Cycle's* review gave Ducatistas an idea of what the F1 production model was like to ride. But first the not-so-good news; the hydraulic clutch: "The

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clutch lever pull is European (read stiff)," stated the report. Now for the F1's good points that *Cycle's* report revealed. Referencing the transmission, the editors opined, "Lever throw is short with minimal linkage slop; those raised on Japanese bikes will find that the gearbox performs precisely over the engine's wide, flat power band." Ah, now that's Italian!

Then the editors cut directly to the chase, addressing the most vital piece of information that every Ducati-phile on the planet was curious about, and that pertained to how the bike handled at speed: "The Ducati invites spirited riding, forgiving of the novice's fluttering inputs yet responsive to the commands of an expert." Now we're talking, and who really cares about that clutch-lever pull thingy that was pointed out elsewhere in the report anyway?

And there was more good news to report from that October 1985 issue. As brilliant as the F1 Replica was on public roads, it proved even more sensational on the racetrack. After a brief session aboard the F1 Replica around the original nine-turn Laguna Seca track, *Cycle's* editors concluded: "Good handling manners on public roads frequently turn to ungainliness on the racetrack. Not so with this Ducati." They ended their on-track session stating, "A study in excess? Indeed. First, the F1 is an excessive street bike that performs on the track. Second, it's a true racer that's street legal." Despite Ducati engineers having to slightly alter the production model's steering geometry to accommodate a wider front tire, the street F1 offered steady handling and predictable steering at all speeds. It was practically poetic justice that a bike with only 75 horsepower could perform so brilliantly. But then, the F1 with its taut trellis frame weighed less than 400 pounds, so

its power-to-weight ratio favored such sporting behavior.

The lads at *Cycle* also pointed out that Massimo Dorbi, the Good Doctor's right-hand man, noted that the Pantah engine platform still had potential for more growth, i.e., bigger jugs. According to Dorbi, claimed the report, Dr. T's aging engine could carry the weight of pistons displacing as much as 850cc, "but no farther."

Confusing as an Italian family reunion

By the time original 750 F1s made it into owners' garages, Cagiva had successfully bailed out Ducati from financial ruin. The resulting company was, in essence, a sweet blend of the two Italian bike makers, and fortunately the contingent from Varese was comfortable about leaving the iconic Ducati logo on the engine cases of most models, the F1 included.

That didn't stop the original Ducati crew in the Borgo Panigale factory from clinging to their old ways of mix-matching various components as the parts supply dictated. One American motorcycle magazine referred to this as building a bike in "cost-effective 'parts-bin' fashion." That dumpster-diving technique of gathering leftover parts also creates a little confusion when trying to pinpoint each bike made during the F1's multi-year run. Welcome to a typical Italian extended-family gathering, and believe me, having an Italian surname I know just how confusing this can be.

The first F1 race replica was officially marketed in America as the FIA, and it was a true racer replica that celebrated Ducati's participation on the racetrack. It was the first Cagiva-



owned Ducati to wear the famous tricolor paint scheme, and subsequent variations included Cagiva's infamous elephant logo as part of the paint graphics. About 300 were initially offered. Fittingly, the 1986 version was touted as the F1B, and the same year Ducati added a variation called the Montjuich to celebrate the F1's win at that legendary Spanish racetrack. The Montjuich didn't have the famous tricolor livery as the F1, and it sported an aluminum swingarm, plus the engine had larger valves to accommodate slightly hotter cams. Its popularity led to two more special "win models," the Laguna Seca (1987) and Santamonica (1988). But by 1988 the effects of Cagiva's acquisition of Ducati were beginning to show when the Ducati 750 Sport showed up. It was perhaps the most subdued version of all the 750-based bikes using the fabulous F1 trellis frame, by now modified to accept the Paso-based engine with its single downdraft, 2-barrel Weber carburetor. Gone was the sexy, race-proven twin Dell'Orto arrangement of original F1 models. Indeed, the 750 Sport was such a diluted interpretation of the F1 that it really didn't deserve to be included in the same discussions as those first Replica-based models.

Jeff Case's 1985 F1

When the F1's rubber first hit the road in 1985, a young Jeff Case cast his gaze on the red, white and green bike, deciding then and there that it was time to belly up to the bar and buy one. Just before he laid down his hard-earned cash, though, his father interceded, suggesting that as a young man, Jeff should instead invest that money into California real estate, which then as now was sure to appreciate in value. Had Jeff's surname been something like Caselli, his emotions probably would have overruled his father's sound financial advice, but alas, his name is Case. He elected to forego the bike and go for the house. "He [Jeff's dad] suggested it might be wiser for me to put that money towards a down payment for a house," says a wiser Jeff Case today. Financially speaking, it proved to be a good decision, and through that and a few other sound invest-

ments, not to mention hard work, years later Jeff navigated himself into a position to buy not only this F1, but various other motorcycles that interest him.

Jeff purchased the F1A in 2012, its odometer reading more than 25,000 miles on the tumbler. That's pretty high mileage for a specialty bike such as this; the old tricolor Duck needed a tuneup. He brought the bike to Superbike Corse (sbkcorse.com) in Laguna Hills, California, where Drew Immiti and James Henderson's crew went to work sorting through the L-twin's rough spots. Nothing major was wrong, and in no time the 748cc engine was purring.

The bike sports some interesting components. The OSCAM wheels are magnesium, although Marvic wheels were the notable wheel of choice by Ducati back in 1985. And as with all F1As, the front 16-inch wheel supports a 38mm Marzocchi fork. The Brembo brakes are the full-floater type, and there's no sidestand to support the bike at rest, only the centerstand. The sleek fairing clings to the chassis using lightweight race-only hardware, and the pair of Dell'Orto carburetors wear tiny aftermarket filters to sift the air before the combustion chambers swirl the precious fuel/air mixture around for power.

For years Jeff displayed the rare Ducati in his living room, but the bike currently resides in Superbike Corse's showroom (accounting for the decals on the fairing), which is where I spotted it. Jeff indicated that he's considering selling the bike, but Immiti privately suggests that Jeff's F1A is destined for something else, what some collectors might deem shrine status. "Jeff's remodeling his house right now," Immiti says, taking a moment to look over his shoulder to make sure Jeff doesn't hear, "I think the bike's going back into the living room when the house is finished."

And that would be a pretty good choice, but with this caveat for Jeff: Keep the engine fluids fresh and topped up, because you never know when you'll get the itch to ride it again. After all, we're talking about one of the best sport bikes ever presented to the world. **MC**



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THE HESKETH

His Lordship's Motorcycle

Story by Margie Siegal
Photos by Nick Cedar

This story starts with a man named Bubbles Horsley. Yes, that's his name, and yes, this story is about a motorcycle — a very rare motorcycle — built in England and called the Hesketh.

Bubbles wanted to race Formula One cars, and persuaded a pal of his to join in the effort. The pal was The Right Honorable Thomas Alexander Fermor-Hesketh, Third Baron Hesketh, or Lord Hesketh for short. The pair had a great time and, after Lord Hesketh hired James Hunt to drive for them, considerable success on the track, winning the 1975 Dutch Grand Prix. "The best way to make a small fortune in racing is to start with a big one," NASCAR driver Junior Johnson once famously said. As the cost of keeping the team going began to exceed even Lord Hesketh's budget, the Hesketh team started taking on projects for other teams to earn a little money, and in the process got quite good at R&D. The Hesketh team stopped racing and became a consulting engineering firm.

The Hesketh

While this was going on, Lord Hesketh started thinking about starting a motorcycle factory. Lord Hesketh was (and is) a patriotic sort of person, and felt keenly the demise of the British motorcycle industry. By 1978, the once-numerous English factories, major players on the world motorcycle market through most of the 20th century, had been reduced to one, Triumph, which was holding on by its toenails. Lord Hesketh also thought there was a place in the market for a big two-wheeled luxury tourer, in essence an updated Brough Superior. He had one designed and called it the Hesketh V1000. The family crest, a rooster with a crown around its neck, served as the bike's logo. The bike was unveiled in 1980 (the cover over the bike was a Union Jack) at the ancestral manse, Easton Neston.

Despite its British origins, the V1000 had much in common with contemporary Ducatis. The technically advanced 90-degree V-twin engine, primarily designed by engine specialists Westlake under the direct supervision of Lord Hesketh, sat fore and aft in the frame. A single crankshaft spun both cylinders, which had a bore and stroke of 95mm x 70mm for a total displacement of 992cc. Chain-driven twin overhead camshafts worked four valves per cylinder, adjusted by shims. A gear-driven primary drive connected to a 5-speed transmission, with chain final drive.

Ignition was electronic Lucas RITA. Despite Prince of Darkness jokes (Why do the British drink warm beer? Because they have Lucas refrigerators!), the Lucas RITA ignition has a good reputation as a reliable, if expensive, component. The engine was claimed to produce 86 horsepower at 6,500rpm — more than enough to haul two riders plus a reasonable amount of gear. The press release claimed that a prototype hit a top speed of 138mph







1983 HESKETH VAMPIRE

Engine: 992cc air-cooled DOHC 90-degree V-twin, 4 valves per cylinder, 95mm x 70mm bore and stroke, 9.5:1 compression ratio, 86hp @ 6,500rpm (claimed)

Top speed: 138mph (claimed)

Carburetion: Two 36mm Dell'Orto PHF

Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, Lucas RITA electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Reynolds 531 nickel-plated steel trellis-style frame w/engine as stressed member/59.5in (1,511mm)

Suspension: Marzocchi telescopic fork front, dual Marzocchi shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: Dual 11in (280mm) Brembo discs front, single 11in (280mm) Brembo disc rear

Tires (stock): Dunlop K91 100/90 x 19in front, 130/90 x 17in rear

Weight (wet): 550lb (250kg)

Seat height: 33in (838mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 6gal (23ltr)/45-55mpg (est.)

Price then/now: \$10,500 (1983)/\$15,000-\$25,000

and that gas mileage was 50mpg.

The engine was a stressed member (as on Vincent twins) of the triangulated, nickel-plated tube frame. Wheels were two-piece alloy assemblies, similar to the contemporary Honda Comstar wheels. Hesketh claimed it had started development of its alloy wheels well before Honda. The wheelbase was 62.5 inches, and the bike had a dry weight of 506 pounds — a reasonable size and weight for a big luxe touring machine. Front forks were Marzocchi and stopping power was provided by Brembo, with two discs at the front and one at the rear.

Heading for production

American motorcycle magazines got wind of the new project and were captivated by the idea of an English Lord starting a motorcycle factory, but it wasn't a great time to try to sell any new motorcycles, what with Honda and Yamaha engaging

in a trade war and unsold bikes sitting in warehouses. The 1980 introduction was supposed to attract investors, and while several attended the intro, none offered to finance the project. Triumph was inter-



Behind the making of the Hesketh Vampire there is more than just dedication. There is a total commitment to the end idea—that of designing, developing and manufacturing the finest motorcycle in the world.

From the outset, our inspiration has been one of motorcycling's finest traditions: the high-capacity V-twin engine—racing, responsive, and so much revered by enthusiasts the world over.

Since working plans of the establishment of a new tradition would satisfy our aim, the development of the classic engine has finally found shape in a road motorcycle of true character, and with a heritage second to none.

Yet words and pictures can represent no more than the pride in a motorcycle in which I have put my name.

HESKETH VAMPIRE

The Right Hon. Lord Hesketh.

As delivered, the Hesketh Vampire was equipped with a full fairing and intended as a high-speed tourer.

ested in the bike — it would provide a British designed alternative to the aging Bonneville — but had no money to purchase the rights.

Lord Hesketh decided to try to produce the bike himself, and was able to obtain financing. Production started in 1982 during a major economic recession — a bad time to start a new company. Making matters worse, the bikes weren't without issue. Balky shifting and grabby clutches plagued early bikes, even those provided to the motoring press, which also





complained about the overly heavy pull of the Hesketh's hydraulic clutch. The sticking clutch was solved by the factory at the start of production by using Ferodo MP2 friction material for the clutch plates, and shifting was improved, but never completely smoothed out. Journalists on both sides of the pond rode the bike and tried to like it, writing enthusiastically about the Hesketh's luxurious plating and paint, but leaks, hard shifting and engine noise put them off.

Making matters worse, the Hesketh's engine had not been properly debugged before the commencement of retail sales and new owners soon found three problems with the machine that should have been fixed before delivery: The pistons made a racket because the piston manufacturer improperly machined them; the rear cylinder tended to run hot; and the cam drive leaked. Given the price — over \$8,000 in 1982 (a contemporary BMW cost less than \$5,000) — these glitches were completely unacceptable.

Second act

Unfortunately, no white knights showed up to save Hesketh from its distress, and between the bad economic situation and bad publicity, Hesketh went under. Attempts to sell the company to Triumph and Cagiva failed, the last straw for Cagiva being a televised interview with a Hesketh manager in which he insulted the Italians. About 130 V1000's were built before the Hesketh factory went out of business.

A second attempt at reviving Hesketh in 1983 resulted in the construction of

50 bikes. Equipped with a fairing, they were called the Vampire. Unfortunately, Hesketh's prospects didn't improve, so Lord Hesketh gave up and sold the rights to his R&D manager, Mick Broom. Broom was able to figure out solutions for the three faults (the cure was referred to as the EN-10 upgrades), which involved owners removing and shipping their engine to Hesketh in England, where it was rebuilt, then reinstalling it when the repaired engine arrived via freight.

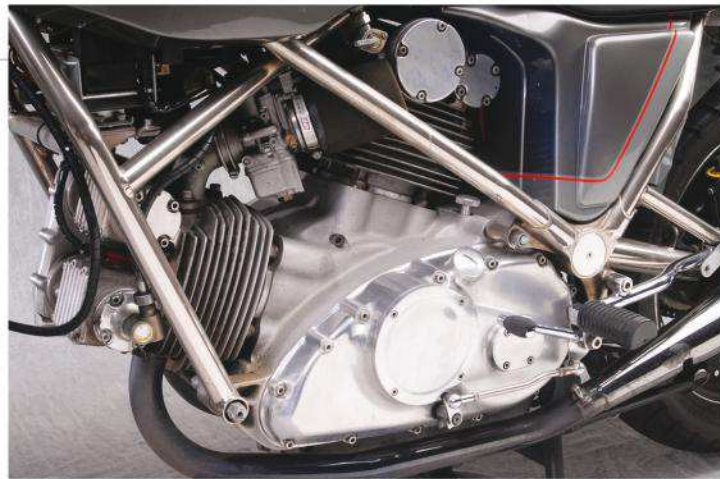
Broom built a few more Hesketh Vampires and some prototypes, but could never get the company off the ground. In 2005, Lord Hesketh decided to sell Easton Neston, the ancestral home,

explaining that his various efforts to make money were not enough to keep the mansion, originally built in 1702, and its extensive grounds in repair. Broom's engineering office and motorcycle factory were located in the former stables, and he had to relocate to Turweston Aerodrome near the Silverstone racing circuit. While packing up the premises, Broom's office was burglarized, resulting in a loss of \$40,000 worth of records, tools and bikes, much of which was irreplaceable. As far as Hesketh went, it seemed without bad luck, the bike would have no luck at all.

In 2010, Broom sold the rights to Hesketh to Paul Sleeman (heskethmotorcycles.co.uk). Sleeman built a few V1000's,



Lord Hesketh with Mike Hailwood (right) at the Hesketh's 1980 launch.



The Hesketh's Westlake-designed double overhead cam V-twin evokes memories of the famous Vincent V-twins of yore.

apparently from existing parts, and started developing a new Hesketh using an S&S engine. He has supposedly built 24 model "24" Heskeths (named after James Hunt's Formula One race number), and has plans to build several other Hesketh models.

Act three

One owner who took advantage of Broom's EN-10 engine upgrades lived in Fairbanks, Alaska. How someone in Fairbanks found out about the Hesketh Vampire and why they decided to buy one is unknown, but apparently this first owner bought the bike from the factory and had it shipped to the Frozen North, then later removed the engine and sent it to England to be fixed.

In the meantime, the Fairbanks owner removed the Vampire's fairing and replaced the headlight. After modifying his Hesketh, he traded it to a broker for a Moto Guzzi. The broker sold the Hesketh to a new owner in the Lower 48 who did not ride it much, if at all, eventually got tired of it, and listed it for sale on Craigslist, along with all the used furniture and shared rental ads. Collector Paul Zell (we featured Paul's custom Vincent special in the first issue of *Motorcycle Classics*, way back in 2005), saw it there, and called Don Danmeier, a friend of his.

Don, a serious Britbike collector and local British bike club spark plug, had been looking for two different bikes — a naked bike (he likes to look at the machinery that makes a motorcycle go) and a Hesketh. He had gone so far as to get in touch with Mick Broom. Well, here



was a naked Hesketh. "I went to see it. I flipped, it was gorgeous," Don recalls. Most bikes on Craigslist have at least one dent, and finding a collector motorcycle in pristine condition listed on Craigslist is like finding a diamond in a compost bin. The seller also had the fairing carefully packed away. "It looked like the owner, or maybe the first owner in Fairbanks, wanted to turn this Vampire into a V1000 by taking the fairing off and adding a Lucas headlight," Don says.

Don liked the idea of turning the Vampire into a V1000, with its much smaller fairing, so he contacted Broom, who shipped him the necessary V1000 parts. Don had them color matched, and installed the V1000 headlight and instrument panel, but has yet to install the small bikini fairing or the little side skirts that go under the gas tank on the V1000.

Don says he knows about three other Heskeths in the U.S. One is in the Barber museum. "The one in the Barber museum reportedly sounds like a bucket of bolts," Don says. "It must have been one of the bikes that got the bad batch of pistons. Hesketh didn't spend nearly enough time on development." There is another one in Alabama, the property of a British expatriate, and the fourth bike

was apparently imported in pieces and has never been reassembled.

Despite the rarity of the Hesketh, Don rides it a lot — at this point he has put 2,000 miles on it. Don is tall and thin, and the tall, narrow Hesketh fits him well. Plus, Don just likes it. It's also one of the newer bikes in his stable, and takes less effort to get going. The electric start works, and Don says that despite the experience of journalists back in the day, the hydraulic clutch is as smooth as butter.

Like most relatively modern bikes, maintenance is fairly simple. "I haven't had to do a lot," Don says. As Don has discovered, an excellent resource for the machine is the Hesketh Owners Club (heskethownersclub.org.uk) in England, which provides downloadable owner's and service manuals, and has an online forum. Curiously, the owner's manual goes into great detail on how to change the oil and filter, but neglects to state the recommended number of miles between oil changes. Some parts, including the windscreen and the exhaust system, are available through the club.

"I'm used to nimble, light, traditional English motorcycles, so there was a bit of a learning curve riding the Hesketh, but now I'm used to it. It's heavy and you need to wind up the revs to get it going — it comes on the cam at 4,000rpm, but once you get the hang of it, it's smooth and comfortable, a wonderful bike," Don says.

"I have taken the Hesketh on rides with the Velocette Owners Club, which tend to be on twisty mountain roads. I can keep up because of the power and the brakes, but the bike is really not meant for that kind of road. It is wonderful on big sweepers, and it's a comfortable long-distance motorcycle. I don't get tired riding it." **MC**

MIKES XS
VINTAGE YAMAHA PARTS



Randakk's
Cycle Shack
VINTAGE HONDA PARTS

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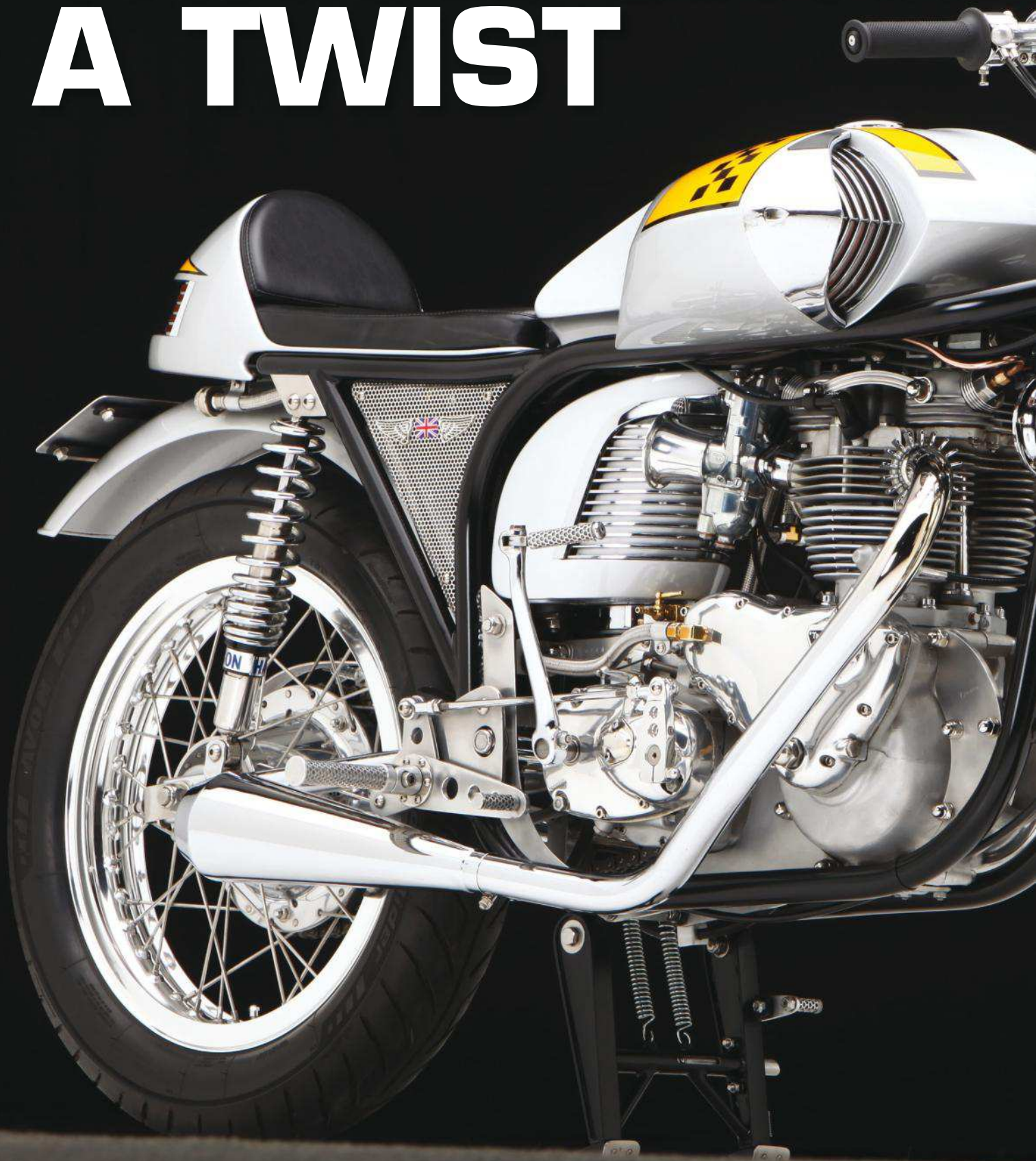
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TRITON WITH A TWIST





Taking a new look at an old favorite

Story by Alan Cathcart

Photos by Phil Hawkins

(Studio photos by Dino Petrocelli)

Triton. For those who remember it first time around, the name flips the on switch in the memory bank, and the images start rolling onto your mental screen. *Jailhouse Rock*, Bill Haley and the Big Bopper. Brylcreem on your hair, white chin scarves, mods and rockers, jukebox jives ... and anyone who rode a bike that wasn't British needed their head examined.

A Sixties hybrid created by marrying a twin-cylinder Triumph engine with a Norton Featherbed frame, the Triton was the archetype café racer of the period, delivering ultra street cred because you couldn't buy one from a dealer — you had to build your own.

Dave Williams built the Triton shown here. It took him four years, building it in his spare time from his job as a fine surface finisher for a custom wood company, and it has ton-up potential, should he so wish. That's because Dave, of Syracuse, New York, built it with big-bore performance to match its superlative Art Deco looks — as I found out for myself when he chucked me the keys last October to spend a day riding it through the Alabama hills, when he brought it to the 2017 Barber Vintage Festival.

Before starting work back in 2006 on crafting the Triton in a shed attached to his suburban home, containing nothing more than a workbench and basic power tools, Dave already had form as a top-level restorer of British motorcycles. A well-used 1968 Triumph T120R he brought back to original once earned a 99-point mark at an Antique Motorcycle Club of America show. "I also purchased a 1973 Bonneville and fixed it up, and then a 1970 Tiger I won quite a few awards with," he says. "But I wanted to build something more individual, where I could be a bit more creative. That's why I built a Triton — there seemed to be a certain freedom about it, except for certain components that define a Triton, like the Norton frame with clip-on handlebars, and the Triumph engine. From that point on you have the freedom to do whatever you want."

Dave used to be an auto body tech, repairing collision damage and helping with restorations. He knows how to work metal, and how to paint it — skills he put to good use restoring his 1965 Buick Riviera. As he was finishing the Buick, Dave was offered the makings of the Triton



WILLIAMS TRITON 804

Engine: 804cc air-cooled OHV parallel-twin, 79mm x 82mm bore and stroke, 9.5:1 compression ratio, 50hp @ 7,000rpm (est., rear wheel)

Top speed: 115mph (est.)

Carburetion: Two 30mm Amal Mk1 Concentric

Transmission: 5-speed with Bob Newby belt primary drive, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, SRM electronic magneto in Lucas K2F housing

Frame/wheelbase: Norton Wideline Featherbed tubular steel dual downtube duplex cradle frame/60in (1,525mm)

Suspension: 38mm Marzocchi telescopic fork front, dual Hagon shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: 9in (230mm) Grimeca TLS drum front, 7in (178mm) SLS drum rear

Tires: 3.25 x 19in front, 120/90 x 18in rear

Seat height: 30.5in (775mm)

Weight (dry): 412lb (187 kg)

project by a friend who'd started assembling the parts needed, but who must have become daunted by what was entailed. With the bare essentials of his Triton template, Dave started work on his Triton, a '60s-style British hot rod done differently. VERY differently. "It took me four years to build it," Dave says. "I worked on it almost every day, probably 20 hours a week. I shut off the TV, I don't have a computer, so I really got into it and just focused on getting it done. Instead of laying around wasting my time, I wanted to build something I'd be proud of. Which I am."

Details

Dave's Triton features a late-1950s Norton Wideline Featherbed frame. It arrived minus a swingarm, so he sourced a T140 component and added twin Hagon shocks. The front end is from a 1973 Benelli 650 Tornado, featuring a 38mm Marzocchi fork and a hefty 230mm Grimeca twin-leading-

shoe drum front brake. A 7-inch BSA/Triumph single-leading-shoe drum from a T140 nestles inside the conical rear hub, with a front 19-inch WM2/1.85-inch Excel shouldered alloy rim up front matched to an 18-inch WM4/2.50-inch rim at the rear. Also worthy of note is the easy-on/easy-off centerstand, a work of art that Dave designed and handcrafted, with a spring-loaded rod that pops out when you push the lever catch mechanism pedal down with your toe. Very clever.

Dave also built the Triton's parallel-twin engine, which started out as a 1962 T120R Bonneville engine in a sorry state. "When I got it, it was basically just a carcass," Dave says. "It was all apart, the crank was out, the cylinder block was off, and there were quite a few smaller parts missing." He decided to give it some extra performance by fitting an 800cc big-bore cylinder kit from Sonny Routt in Maryland. He installed a one-piece crank from a later

Author Alan Cathcart enjoys the twisty Alabama roads aboard the Triton.





unit-construction 750cc Triumph (much stiffer than the bolted-up three-piece pre-unit part), fitted with meaty H-section billet aluminum connecting rods and forged pistons from MAP Cycle in Florida (mapcycle.com) delivering a 9.5:1 compression ratio. On top went a nine-bolt Bonneville cylinder head with a mild flow job and stock valves fitted with S&W valve springs, operated by 1060 Megacycle cams and fed by a pair of 930 Amal 30mm Mk1 Concentrics. An electronic magneto produced by SRM in Aberystwyth, Wales, cleverly housed in the shell of a period Lucas K2F magneto, supplies sparks. The completed pre-unit engine and gearbox are mounted in the Norton frame using a set of engine plates from Unity Equipe (unityequipe.co.uk).

Dave says the reworked engine delivers around 50 horsepower at 7,000rpm at the rear wheel, transmitted via a 5-speed conversion to the standard 4-speed pre-unit Triumph gearbox and 4-spring oil-bath clutch, using a later T140 gear cluster matched to a Bob Newby belt primary-drive conversion. "It was a bit tricky installing that without making it too obvious," Dave says.

"I had to space out the primary cover about three-quarters of an inch to fit everything in there." The steel primary drive cover has a trio of circular windows cut into it, through whose mesh you can see the Sparx three-phase alternator. Dave made the gracefully swept-back exhausts, and they have a trick up their sleeves. Look inside each reverse-cone megaphone and you'll see a fan! "I just thought it'd be something nice to put there," shrugs Dave with a wry smile. "The only thing wrong is that I can't see them whizzing round myself when I'm riding the bike!"

Dave deserves heaps of credit for combining Old World with New, in bringing a genuinely individual look to his Triton café racer. "I had some front signal light bezels that were left over from restoring my '65 Buick, and I just had an idea one day that it'd be neat to have those incorporated into the tank as functioning signal lights, as part of its contoured shape," he explains. "So I took some wire and made a frame to see if there was space for the real tank to be installed under the metal shroud, and if everything would fit together. Well, it seemed



The level of polish and detail is stunning. Mesh windows in the primary cover show off the alternator and clutch (right).



like it would, so first I made the real 3-gallon inner tank. Then I rolled out some curved panels with an English wheel I'd made myself, and basically welded them all in there to create a shroud around the tank. I made this fit onto the motorcycle frame's twin upper loops, and then installed the chromed bezels with signal lights behind them, facing forward. I wanted to create some sort of an organic shape that looks like it could be swimming in the ocean, or flying. I think the tank has a kind of manta ray look to it, which if you combine that with the geometric lines of the bezels really makes it stand out."

The blend of organic and geometric components extends to other parts of the bike besides the fuel tank. Dave made the oil tank from scratch so another Riviera signal light bezel could be attached to the front of it, before folding it into the Wideline frame's curved rear loops. The side panels behind the tank are fluted horizontally, and carry a Union Jack emblem on each side. Dave also made the Triton's single seat — and again there's yet another chromed Buick bezel acting as the shroud for the indicators and taillight. Finally, the color scheme — the silver-gray with yellow flashes and yellow and black checkers comes from the F86 Sabre fighter jet. Very appropriate, and it looks nice, too.

Riding the Triton

The Triton gives off an aura of unmistakable quality that has passers-by stopping to admire it when you're parked up. Hopping aboard and kicking the centerstand release lever with my left heel, allowing me to gently roll the bike forward as it tucks up and away, reveals a stretched-out stance that's very '60s café racer. You reach quite a long way forward to the clip-ons, which, thanks to their swan neck mounts, are however set reasonably high, so they don't induce cramps in your arms and shoulders. After turning the ignition key, located at the front of the seat, starting the Triton from cold is tough, and not



The tank houses functional turn signals and bezels from a 1965 Buick Riviera (left). The mufflers each house a small fan that spins when the engine is running (above).

just because I'm a twin-cylinder kick-starting wimp. Even with full retard on the ignition lever and both Amal carbs tickled to death, the Triton refused to fire up the first or even fourth time, even with a practiced kick from Dave. Eventually, Dave persuades it into life, and once warm it starts fairly easily first kick. The twin swept-back exhausts deliver the flat drone that's the trademark signature tune of a 360-degree Triumph twin, with the little fans whirling around inside the mufflers!

Select first gear on the one-down right-foot lever and you're off. Once the Triton's big 804cc engine is motoring, all the traditional benefits of a British twin are there, with loads of torque delivered in a strong, unburstable-seeming fashion, yet with an appetite for revs. The trademark twang from the exhaust adds to the allure, and even with the sportier Megacycle cams it's a forgiving engine, pulling cleanly from 1,500rpm upwards with hardly any clutch. From there to just over 4,500rpm is the engine's sweet spot, with the extra torque of the big-bore engine delivering crisp acceleration from low down, as well as good mid-range roll-on in higher gears. Four grand on the rev counter delivers 70mph cruising in fifth gear, and while there is some vibration above that point it's nothing you can't put up with. Changing up at around 5,500rpm doesn't seem to affect acceleration unduly, and the Triton is quite user-friendly in traffic.

The torquey, responsive and forgiving engine, coupled with the smooth, light-action clutch make town work untiring, if still merely an overture for the open road ...

And that's where the Triton excels, because the Wideline Featherbed frame didn't get its peerless reputation by chance. The extra stability in faster turns delivered here by the much

"I must admit, it's nice to have something I put so much time into so widely admired."

longer 60-inch wheelbase — with a Roadholder fork and Norton rear end it's more usually just 55.5 inches, a massive difference — very surprisingly doesn't impact too greatly on the Triton's agility in tighter turns up in the Alabama hills. It's rock steady around fast sweepers, relatively nimble thanks to the low-slung weight round tighter turns, and with only a trace of understeer under power to remind you of the 19-inch front wheel, though this is easy to correct thanks to the light steering. The Marzocchi fork shrugs off bumps and ripples in the road surface, and the compliant damping of the rear Hagons give reasonable ride quality by the standards of the period by using their full stroke. They're not over-sprung or over-damped, so you don't get tossed up off the seat each time you hit a bump.

The Triton feels surprisingly modern riding along the twisting Alabama country roads, not only because of the compliant suspension that allows it to shrug off road shock, but also because of the excellent grip from the Avon tires. The downside of this is finding out quite quickly that the centerstand lever is set too low. The confidence from such a high degree of grip means I'm encouraged to start riding this modern day café racer the way it was meant to be ridden — hard and fast. As I do, I find I don't have to squeeze too hard on the lever to get the twin-leading-shoe Grimeca front brake to stop properly — which it does, without grabbing. It is aided by the surprisingly effective rear drum in making what at 412 pounds dry is quite a light bike by pre-unit Triumph standards easy to slow.

Looking back

Back in the 1950s, there was a big craze in Italy for emulating flying saucers in car and motorcycle design. Both Alfa Romeo and MV Agusta made a so-called Disco Volante model, and that's what the styling of the Williams Triton reminds me of. But most of all the bike gives off a sense of innovation in design coupled with excellence of execution. "I must admit to being pretty satisfied with it," Dave says. "I've gone to a lot of shows with it in the seven years since I completed it, and I've done well at them. I never thought when I was building it in my garage, all through the cold winters we get in upstate New York, with just a little kerosene heater to fend off the frost, that it would end up getting the attention it's got. I realize it's quite an eye catcher, and though the tank is the main attention grabber that people first look at, they then catch sight of something else, and then they'll see another thing, and before you know it, they're spending a half hour standing around finding little details on the bike that they like. I must admit, it's nice to have something I put so much time into so widely admired. Would I build another one for somebody? Yes, it would be satisfying to do that, so long as the financial circumstances worked out, because I like working on bikes and building stuff like this. I was thinking of making my own frame next time, still with a Triumph engine — so we could call it a Trilliams!"

Whether that happens remains to be seen, but if you're interested, you can email Dave at dnwtriton59@gmail.com if you want the first Trilliams off the production line! **MC**



FLIGHT OF THE BUMBLEBEE





DKW's unforgettable Hummel

Story by Hamish Cooper
Photos by Phil Aynsley

The 1960s were an era of emerging youth fashion and style. Actor Sean Connery (aka James Bond) was teaching the boys how to drink martinis while designer Mary Quant was teaching the girls how to wear miniskirts and hot pants. Conventional design was being challenged everywhere, and an unlikely German moped, the Hummel, joined the Swinging Sixties party.

It might have been part motorcycle and part moped, but its designers wanted it to be neither. Originally a utilitarian commuter that had been around since 1956, for 1961 the Hummel — German for bumblebee — was reinvented with futuristic body panels and a large cowl over the engine. They were hoping it would reinvent the styling of personal transport for an emerging youth market. In reality, it looked as fantastic as something out of the sci-fi television cartoon *The Jetsons*.

The new Hummel 115 was launched with a classy advertising push that resembled the “You meet the nicest people on a Honda” campaign. The company’s sales brochure read: “Connoisseurs ride DKWs.” Sadly, the European motorcycle press wasn’t impressed and cruelly described it as “the tin banana.” The Hummel faded from the market.

Art Deco on an acid trip

Collector Stewart Ingram is undeterred by period comments about his Hummel. He can see the humor of it all and describes his 1961 DKW Model 115 Hummel as “Art Deco on an acid trip.”

The Hummel is part of Stewart’s eclectic 16-bike collection that includes a 1969 50cc Itom Astor Super Sport and a 1956 Maserati, which is a replica of a 125 GTS the factory prepared for the 1957 Giro d’Italia. The San Francisco-based real estate agent is proud of his Hummel and has even shown it at the famous Quail Motorcycle Gathering near Monterey, California.

While the Hummel may have been unloved when it first debuted, today the bike has a new status in the world of motorcycle collecting. Good examples are hard to find and can change hands for upwards of \$10,000.

The story of the Hummel mirrors the history of a couple of famous companies. The 48cc, 2-stroke moped with a 3-speed gearbox and conventional



1961 DKW HUMMEL 115

Engine: 48cc air-cooled 2-stroke single, 40mm x 39mm bore and stroke, 2hp @ 4,950rpm
Top speed: 25mph
Carburetion: Single Bing
Transmission: 3-speed, enclosed chain final drive
Electrics: 6v generator, magneto ignition
Frame/wheelbase: Pressed steel frame/49in (1,245mm)
Suspension: Leading-link with dual shocks front, swingarm with dual shocks rear
Brakes: 3.9in (100mm) drum brake front and rear
Tires: 2.75 x 20in front and rear
Weight: 163lb (74kg)
Seat height: 32in (814mm)
Fuel capacity/MPG: 1.6gal (6.2ltr)/87-98mpg
Price then/now: \$395 (est.)/\$5,000-\$12,000

styling was first produced in 1956 by DKW, which had been the planet's biggest motorcycle manufacturer before World War II.

In 1958, Daimler-Benz took control of Auto Union, which was the umbrella organization for Germany's motor industry. The motorcycle manufacturers were sold off because the power brokers didn't see a future in two-wheel production. This led to Victoria, Express-Werke AG and DKW, some of the world's oldest motorcycle manufacturers, becoming the Zweirad Union. This conglomerate shared production resources to increase efficiency.

These were not exactly the glory days for the German motorcycle industry. Even NSU, a land-speed record holder in the mid-1950s and a fierce competitor on the track, ceased motorcycle production, and eventually DKW formed part of Audi.



The panel covering the handlebars features a Zweirad Union badge (above left), and a Nuremberg coat of arms can just be seen on top of the headlight nacelle (far left).

Space age scooter

The radically revised Hummel was launched in 1961 and ran until 1965. It was an obvious attempt to blur the lines between cars and motorcycles. Even the engine was hidden by a car-like grille.

Remember, this was the grand era of car design, which seemed to be influenced by what was going on in the space race. In the late 1950s, tailfins and swooping bodywork with pillarless doors and starburst logos were the bread and butter of the typical automotive design engineer. Look no further than the split rear window of the 1963 Chevrolet Corvette to see how this spaceship design ethic had become seriously mainstream.

The Hummel took full advantage of this new age of design. Its headlight formed the end of an all-encompassing body that contained the gas tank, seat unit and taillight. Underneath was



The engine wears a Victoria badge on its right side and a Zweirad Union on the other. The chrome shroud is mesmerizing.



a stamped steel frame. The rear chain was fully enclosed.

There were two models; the 115, which produced 2 horsepower at 4,950rpm, and the 155 model, which pushed out up to 4.2 horsepower at 6,500rpm. This was good enough to propel the little bike to 45mph, but it was never an open-road machine. Aimed at the youth market, its engine size was just under the limit for first-time riders.

An indication of the sharing of resources among the Zweirad Union is the badging on the Hummel. It has the nameplate of Victoria (a motorcycle company established in 1901) on one side of the engine with a Zweirad Union badge on the other. The Nuremberg coat of arms takes pride of place on the headlight nacelle. It doesn't take huge powers of deduction to conclude that the Hummel was produced at the old Victoria

"Stewart describes riding his pride and joy as a 'strange experience.'"

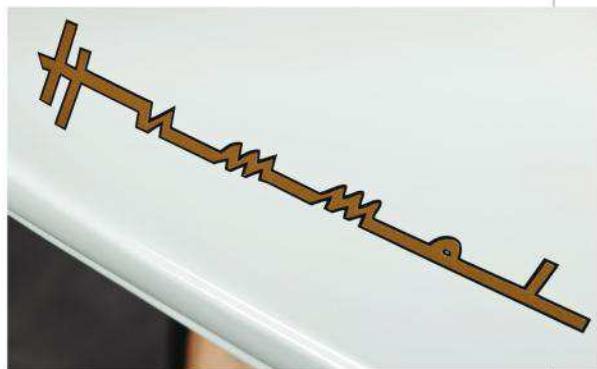
factory in Nuremberg by the Zweirad Union for DKW. It's a bit like a Honda having Suzuki and Yamaha badging.

Unrestored time capsule

Stewart's Hummel is the more humble-performing 115. Remarkably, he bought it in the original, unrestored condition it is in now, so it can claim to be a true time capsule of another age of brave industrial design. However, to experience this era of the early 1960s in the modern age is slightly daunting.

Stewart describes riding his pride and joy as a "strange experience," as the leading-link front suspension and huge front fender give a vagueness to the steering. DKW knew a thing or two about 2-stroke engines and Stewart says the engine, cooled by a large fan, is "remarkably quiet." He's proud of the Hummel, which is a rare piece of motorcycle history.

While he also has an interest in cars, Stewart prefers motorcycles. "Collector bikes are more down-to-earth and hands-on," he says. "You get grease under the fingernails. You can get consumed by it." **MC**



The long, chromed headlight nacelle holds a tiny speedometer, just forward of the handlebars. The logo is period perfect.



NAME GAMES

1967 Norton/Matchless N15CS

Story and photos by Robert Smith

Putting one maker's engine in another manufacturer's frame became popular in Britain in the Sixties. First choice was usually the very tunable Triumph 500cc or 650cc twin in a Norton Featherbed frame. The result was called a Triton, a blend recognized as almost a model unto itself.

So what do you call a Matchless motorcycle with a Norton engine? A Matchton? A Nortless? Well, according to Associated Motorcycles, the owner of both brands, it was either or both a Matchless and a Norton, depending on which badge you preferred. Confused? You have a right to be, and there is an explanation — but first, some background.

Consolidation in the British motor-



cycle industry after World War II saw many brands absorbed into larger companies. When BSA bought Triumph in 1951, it became the biggest motorcycle manufacturer in the world at that time, also owning the Ariel, Sunbeam and New Hudson brands. Associated Motorcycles, the Matchless owners, had absorbed AJS in the 1930s, adding Francis-Barnett (1947), James (1951) and Norton (1952).

But by 1962, AMC was drowning in red ink, hit hard by the boom in imported scooters. To cut costs, they decided to close the crumbling and inefficient Norton plant in Birmingham and consolidate production at their Plumstead, London, factory.

Whether what happened next was planned or happenstance is moot, but it solved a number of issues for the company.

Finding a solution

Feeling the ever-present pressure for “more cubes” from its U.S. distributor, in 1962 AMC had launched a 750cc version of its own parallel twin as the Matchless model G15 (also known as the G15/45). In an attempt to mitigate mechanical issues (mostly crankshaft related), the 750 engine was detuned, yet it still proved unreliable, and the G15 was dropped in 1963.

And while the 750cc Norton Atlas had been selling well in the U.S., AMC realized it was missing out on a growing market for scrambler-oriented bikes because the featherbed frame used in the Atlas proved too fragile for off-highway use. Triumph and BSA had developed off-highway versions of their street bikes for desert racing that were both strong and handled well, the Triumph T120C and the BSA Wasp/Hornet.

But there was a solution. AMC had demonstrated that it had a strong enough frame for offroad use in the 650cc G12CS (CS for Competition/Spring frame) of the early Sixties, unfortunately abandoned because of engine reliability issues. And with Norton production now in-house in Plumstead, AMC had direct access to the reliable and reasonably powerful Atlas engine — even though it had been detuned with a 7.5:1 compression because of excessive vibration.

For 1964, the G15 was relaunched as the Mk2 and fitted with the 745cc Norton Atlas engine, Norton Roadholder fork, and Norton brakes — the first AMC-Norton hybrid. The sportier, café-style G15CSR (R for road) soon arrived with swept-back headers, rear-set footpegs and lower handlebars. It was mainly intended for the home market, though some did make it across the pond.

Alongside the G15 and G15CSR were AJS branded variants, identical but for the badge and paint: the Model 33 and 33CSR were usually finished in polychromatic blue.

Based on the 650cc G12CS, the G15CS Atlas Scrambler, with its AMC



frame and Norton Atlas engine, was built specifically for export. For the G15CS, the dual cradle frame and swingarm were modified to accept a 2-inch-over Norton Roadholder fork (fitted with internals from AMC's own Teledraulic unit) with steel tubes covering external springs, and a Norton rear wheel.

The Atlas engine was machined to accept the AMC alloy primary chaincase with drive to the AMC/Norton 4-speed gearbox. Gas and oil tanks and the battery box all came from the G12CS. The resulting bike was



1967 NORTON N15CS/ MATCHLESS G15CS

Engine: Norton Atlas 745cc air-cooled OHV parallel twin, 73mm x 89mm bore and stroke, 7.5:1 compression ratio, 55hp @ 6,800rpm

Top speed: 100mph (est.)

Carburetion: Two Amal 389 Monobloc or 30mm Amal 930 Concentric (late models)

Transmission: 4-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, Lucas K2F magneto or coil and breaker points ignition (late models)

Frame/wheelbase: Matchless mild steel dual down-tube double cradle frame/57in (1,448mm) (est.)

Suspension: Norton Roadholder telescopic forks front, dual shocks rear

Brakes: 8in (203mm) SLS drum front, 7in (178mm) SLS drum rear

Tires: 3.25 x 19in front, 4.25 x 18in rear

Weight (dry): 407lb (185kg)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 2.5gal (9.45ltr)/40mpg (est.)

Price then/now: NA/\$6,000-\$12,000



The frame for the N15CS/G15CS came from Matchless and the engine was the 745cc parallel twin as used in the Norton Atlas, but with an AMC primary chaincase.

sold with a Norton badge as the G15CS/N Atlas Scrambler, and with the Matchless logo as the G15CS/M Matchless 750 Sports Scrambler. Both were finished in Cardinal Red.

They proved very competitive in desert racing, with Californian Mike Patrick winning the Cross-Country National Championship outright on an Atlas Scrambler in 1964, inter-

Something of a factory bitsa, the bodywork was sourced from the Matchless G12CS.





rupting Triumph's domination of the Open class.

For 1965, the G15CS was relaunched with a Norton logo as the N15CS, and with the new winged Matchless tank badge as the G15CS. Changes included a revised fork (now with Norton internals), and with gaiters rather than steel tube covers.

Production continued sporadically with numerous "serial" changes into 1967, by which time the N15CS was fitted with coil ignition replacing the magneto, Amal Concentric carburetors replacing the Monoblocs, and a new high-flow "six-start" oil pump. A slimmer seat and restyled fenders were fitted, and both the Norton and Matchless variants were finished in Cardinal Red.

When AMC ran out of money in 1966 and went bust, its assets were purchased from the receiver by Manganese-Bronze Holdings, and the company was re-formed as Norton-Villiers in early 1967.

New owner Dennis Poore had ambitious plans for the company, which included a new Norton to replace the Atlas — the forthcoming Commando. But another opportunity was about



Dual Amal Concentrics fuel this Norton N15CS, although it's fitted with the earlier magneto ignition.

to present itself from the U.S.

California connection

The story goes that Joe Berliner of U.S. distributors Berliner Corp. saw an opportunity to create the ultimate British twin desert sled. AMC's best offroad frame was the light-but-strong Reynolds 531 chrome-moly dual downtube item used in the G85CS, the last of the Matchless line of offroad singles. But the 500cc single was down on power compared with the competition, and Berliner proposed an Atlas-powered version. However, AMC told Berliner they would be unable to fit the Atlas engine in the G85 chassis. Whether this was a technical or commercial decision is unclear.

California dealer Bob Blair of ZDS Motors in Glendale and his mechanic Steve Zabaro decided they would try. Blair had a G85CS with a crashed front end, which he fitted with a new fork and an Akront alloy rim laced to a Matchless hub. A new N15CS provided the donor engine. With suitable modifications and with Duralumin engine plates cut to suit, the Atlas engine was a snug fit in the G85 chas-

sis, and became the prototype for the Norton P11 (*Motorcycle Classics*, September/October 2010).

Berliner sent the complete machine, together with Bob Blair, to the Plumstead factory to debrief what was required, and the first production P11 was built in March 1967. The basic concept, with numerous changes to components, remained in production for the following two years, through the P11A and street-legal P11 Ranger versions. The hybrid line was finally dropped in 1969 so the factory could concentrate on the Commando.

Stanley Krohn's 1967 Norton N15CS

The N15CS was more mix 'n match than just a Matchless with a Norton engine, like the P11. The N15CS featured here has an appropriate history.

It was originally sold by Pat's Top Hat Cycle in Burien, Washington. "Pat" Patereau was the Norton and Ducati dealer for the area, and his son Jim went on to be an accomplished local competitor. Stanley Krohn bought the N15CS as a used bike from Pat's in the late 1960s.

"Somewhere along the line it got kind of chopped out," says Mark Zenor of Zenor's Norton Service in Graham, Washington, who carried out the restoration. As Mark received it, it had the wrong rear fender and taillight. At the front was a different headlight, the forks had been modified 6 inches over, and it was topped off with "chopper bars that were the chrome twisted squares," Zenor says.

Krohn had taken the Norton to a cycle shop that was going to rebuild the cylinder head, but the engine had never been reassembled, and the dismantled motorcycle sat in a shed for 18 years. "We got it out of that shed four years ago," Zenor says.



A classic British face if ever there was one. The relatively narrow Norton Atlas engine is almost invisible in a head-on view, underscoring the slimness of Sixties British bikes.



cylinder head responded to the valves being re-lapped. Though the cylinder block was reusable, showing scuff marks and some minor scoring, Zenor replaced it after discovering a broken fin. Surprisingly, the bottom end was in good shape. "They're pretty hard to beat up," Zenor says, adding, "The gearbox wasn't too terrible. A couple of gears had that usual spalling and pitting, which we took care of. The rest of it was really finding the little bits, like the proper fenders, mounts and stays."

The seat proved especially problematic: "I don't think that seat's quite proper," Zenor notes. "It's in that in-between year." N15s are usually shown with a seat without the all-round seam on Krohn's bike. "I think it should have come with a little bit longer, skinnier, more rounded-looking seat, like you'd see on a Fastback, but I could never find one," Zenor adds.

Zenor's biggest challenge was "figuring out all the right nuts and bolts." It seems AMC never published a separate illustrated parts book for the N15CS, just a supplemental listing. That made finding the right parts even more difficult. "Everything's by number and period nomenclature. I'm doubly handicapped here. American English!" Zenor says. "It took me awhile to figure out 'pins' were 'bolts.' I worked with Mike Partridge at Walridge Motors (walridge.com). He's got a bit of a sweet spot for these hybrids. He keeps a good stock. We swapped some stuff back and forth, and I ended up getting just about everything down to most of the fasteners."

Zenor had the frame powder coated by American Powder Coating in Auburn, Washington (253-833-7870), to an "80 percent shine." The sandblasting was done by Performance Coatings (perform-

"I finally got it done this fall."

Zenor could tell there had been some head work, but "it sat out in the open uncovered for that whole time, so it all had to come back apart." The

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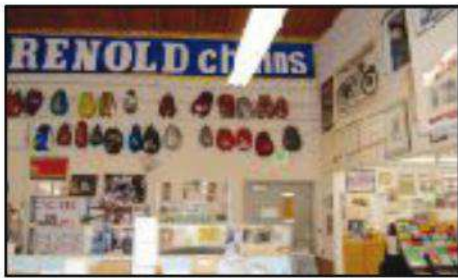
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Restorer Mark Zenor riding owner Stanley Krohn's 1967 Norton N15CS. The "CS" designation originated with Matchless, standing for "Competition/Spring frame."

mancecoatings.com), and the painting was done by Moslander's Rod and Custom (moslanders.com) in Monroe, Washington.

Putting it together revealed some interesting assembly protocol. "The centerstand and the bash plate. There's nothing that tells you to put them on first. They should really go in place before you load the engine and gearbox in there. I've got them on, but now that I've experienced it, doing it again I'd put it together differently," Zenor says.

Part of the problem is that the Norton engine is a pretty tight fit in the Matchless chassis, which makes adjusting the magneto almost impossible. "It becomes really apparent when you put it side-by-side with an Atlas, and you can see how that gearbox and engine was really spread out for the frame. It's just leaps and bounds easier [the Atlas] to work on."

The N15CS is a perfect example of how adversity sometimes creates



opportunity. If AMC hadn't decided to close Norton's Bracebridge Street, Birmingham, factory and consolidate production of Matchless and Norton motorcycles in Plumstead, it's quite possible no one would have thought of putting a Norton engine in a Matchless frame.

There's no question that the success of the N15CS in the U.S. kept AMC/Norton-Villiers afloat until the

Commando came along in 1968, adding another 10 years to the life of the aging Atlas engine. But that's a whole other story ...

Meanwhile, if you'd like to see Stanley's N15CS in the flesh, it will be featured at the International Norton Owners Association Tall Timber Rally in Elma, Washington, from July 16-19, 2018. Go to nortonrally.com to learn more. **MC**



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An eclectic assortment of vintage motorcycles is on display while period artwork and promotional materials decorate the walls.

CLASSIC SCENE

A museum blossoms amongst the bluebonnets

Story and photos by Corey Levenson

Springtime in the Lone Star State typically brings fields carpeted with wildflowers, but this year something special has popped up in the middle of Central Texas: a new museum full of classic bikes.

The Hill Country Motorheads Vintage Motorcycle Museum in Burnet, Texas, had its grand opening on April 14, 2018, after a dozen years of planning and more than two years of hard work. The museum is the brainchild of Pat Hanlon, a baby boomer who first fell in love with motorcycles in the 1960s and 1970s. Not surprisingly, the bikes from that era are prominently featured in the new museum, and if you were riding motorcycles during those years, odds are good the museum will induce nostalgia.

Pat raced motocross in the early 1980s, and when he stopped competing he started collecting bikes. By 2005 he had acquired about 100 motorcycles and was faced with a choice: either preside over a large private collection of dusty old bikes, or start a museum and share his toys with the public. We can all be thankful that Pat chose wisely.

The museum occupies about 7,000 square feet and is comprised mainly of two large rooms: an exhibit hall where the collection is on display and a large, open communal room (the “Man Cave”) with a pool table, big-screen TV, a long counter and a bunch of motorcycle posters and memorabilia.

When considering the layout for the new museum, Pat took inspiration from two other museums: the Early Years of Motocross Museum in Villa Park, California, set up by the late AMA Hall of Famer Tom White (earlyyearsofmx.com) and the Harley-Davidson museum in Milwaukee (harley-davidson.com/museum).

There are more than 200 bikes in Pat’s collection, with 70-80 machines currently on display. Even though most of the motorcycles seen on the roads surrounding the museum are Harleys, the collection is very international, with bikes from Japan, Europe and the U.S.

In addition to garden-variety Hondas, Yamahas and Suzukis, more obscure gems with names like Greeves, Hodaka, Bultaco, Sachs and Cheney are also on display. The majority of the motorcycles reflect Pat’s first love — offroad machines — but there are also many classic road (and road racing) bikes



Clockwise from above: The museum entrance; a lovely BSA twin flat tracker; a pair of Yamaha 2-stroke racers; a WWII-era Triumph twin; Suzuki TS90 motocrosser is an exact replica of the bike museum proprietor Pat Hanlon shared and raced with his brother in the early 1970s; a reproduction 1910 Harley-Davidson; a Russ Collins dragster powered by two Honda CB750 4-cylinder engines.





Classic scramblers like this BSA (left) share floor space with vintage flat trackers, including this Rotax-powered Harley-Davidson.

represented in the museum, including examples from Vincent, BSA, Norton, Triumph, Moto Guzzi and others.

A number of the road bikes and race bikes are on loan to the museum from other collectors. Among that group is a classic Russ Collins dragster built around a pair of Honda CB750 engines fed by four Weber sidedraft carburetors, as well as a pair of Yamaha 2-stroke road racers. Pat's goal is to have something for everyone, and the plan is to rotate the bikes on display so that folks will want to visit more than once.

The museum obtains its bikes through ads, auctions and word-of-mouth, with folks approaching them and offering interesting additions to the collection. The museum has its own restoration workshop and plans to offer restored and restorable classic bikes for sale. Pat would like to assemble a collection of machines that would serve as good starting points for those who might want

to acquire something as a project and build it up themselves. The museum will also serve as a source of information regarding sources of parts and availability of restoration/repair services for projects.

Pat sees the museum as a focal point for classic bike enthusiasts, and he plans to be deeply involved with the vintage motorcycle community in Central Texas. Club events, bike shows, poker runs and other social gatherings are all on the agenda. Pat also hopes the museum will serve as a local attraction that will help educate those who may not be familiar with the wide world of motorcycling.

The Hill Country Motorheads Vintage Motorcycle Museum joins the well-established Lone Star Motorcycle Museum in Vanderpool, Texas (motorcycleclassics.com/classic-motorcycle-touring/lone-star-motorcycle-museum-texas), as a must-see



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Offroad machines predominate, but there's something for everyone to enjoy, like an OSSA with rider — high overhead (below).

destination for classic motorcycle enthusiasts visiting the region. The new museum is at 2001 West State Highway 29, just west of US 281 in Burnet. Admission is a reasonable \$7 (seniors, active military and veterans are only \$5 and kids under 12 are free) and the hours are currently Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Look for more information on Facebook or on the museum's website (hillcountrymotorheads.com), or call (512) 553-4078. **MC**

Hill Country riding

The town of Burnet — known as “The Bluebonnet Capital of Texas” — sits in the heart of the Texas Hill Country, about 55 miles northwest of Austin and 100 miles north of San Antonio. It's small enough to easily navigate, but big enough to have readily available services like motels, fuel and BBQ. Better still, it's surrounded by some of the best motorcycle riding roads the state has to offer. Buchanan Lake is nearby, as are the towns of Llano, Fredericksburg, Luckenbach and Blanco, and most of the roads in the area are twisty, two-lane affairs that wind through rolling, oak-covered hills.

Pat likes a few roads near the museum including State Park Road 4 (south off SR 29, west of Burnet) which goes through Inks Lake State Park. Another good ride goes up the east side of Buchanan Lake (take RM 690 north off SR 29 to RM 2341). Really, it's hard to go wrong.

Butler Motorcycle Maps, which specializes in maps for motorcycle riders, has one devoted to the Texas Hill Country (butler-maps.com/motorcycle-road-maps/texas-hill-country-map), and we'd highly recommend it for anyone planning to ride in the area. You can also access their maps through Rever, an online route-planning website/app (rever.co).



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ESCAPE TO TWALD

An oral history of the annual
Chicago to Boscobel vintage motorcycle run

Stories compiled and edited by Anders Carlson
Photos by the participants

Why do we always wish we were elsewhere? A group of vintage motorcycle riders in Chicago answered this question by starting the “TWALD” ride 17 years ago. It stands for “Two Weeks After Labor Day” or, “The Week After Labor Day.” It’s about finding “elsewhere,” geographically and spiritually.

“Escape to Wisconsin” was the Wisconsin Tourism Department slogan from 1980-1985. TWALD means escape through spirited riding, productive carousing, frequent breakdowns, occasional crashes, the odd marriage proposal and everlasting bonds between fellow riders.

It’s the best riding experience you’ll ever have, made possible by the most questionable decisions you can make.

“Organized chaos. Really fun chaos.”

Bob Burns: The first TWALD was in Galena around 2001. The idea was to find a place someone with a CB350 and a backpack could make it to in a day. That’s what you do with a motorcycle, you leave. Leave the BS behind. The job, the news, all of it. A lot of people’s first time leaving town on a motorcycle came at TWALD.

Fred Cousins: TWALD started because Bob wanted to get away and ride somewhere closer than Michigan or Canada. It was to include a bonfire.

Bob Burns: 30 people showed up in the rain on Goose Island that morning. We didn’t even make it to the highway before a guy on a Norton cracked his oil tank open. And then someone else dropped their bike while we were sorting the Norton.

Tina Lefauve: TWALD is organized chaos. Really fun chaos.

Chad “Chadwick” Dennis: Some dorkwads from Chicago thought it was a good idea to ride crappy vintage motorcycles to a small town and stay in outdated, zero-amenities motels while riding some of the most fabulous roads in the state.



On the road: Stretching legs and bonding with fellow riders.

things out around the Mississippi River. We turned right at the Wisconsin River, and it was like, "Hello, Boscobel."

Joe Block: The geography is truly unique. Join me on a Sunday morning ride and you'll be treated to two to three hours of beautiful, challenging twists, turns and valleys where you ride as fast as you feel comfortable with and never see traffic for 80 miles.

Bob Burns: We visited the Sands Motel when they had that gorgeous neon sign, talked to the owner who thought TWALD was a great idea, and then left Boscobel. Then we saw Hubl's Motel, which changed everything. The owner said, "All the summer folks are gone and the hunters haven't arrived. You can do whatever you want."

Tina Lefauve: Boscobel? It's a typical hunting town even when it's not hunting season. They're always glad to see you.

William "Bosco Bill" Becker: I was born in Boscobel, raised on a farm nearby. I stopped in town on my CB750 chopper and was looking at a Ural sidecar rig when this burly guy emerges from a bar with his tall gorgeous mate. I figured the Ural caught his eye, but he walked right over to my chopper and gave it the evil eye. I was expecting, "Why would you do that to a bike," but he dug it and explained his love of single overhead cam 750s. That's how I met Big Bob and Jen.

Tina Lefauve: So Bosco Bill shows up at the Hubl on this Honda with extended forks. He's got a baseball hat, camo jacket and work boots. Who's this farm boy on a chopper? But he led the ride. We tried to keep up, but my Laverda was no match. We were amazed how fast he was.

William "Bosco Bill" Becker: Fun facts about Boscobel? John F. Kennedy and Jackie stayed at the Boscobel Hotel during his

Matte Black: Take your vintage bike out of town. Let's have some adventures, we're all mechanics-ish.

Bob Burns: The point was, if it would do 50 miles an hour, in four and a half hours you'd be in Boscobel.

Amanda Scampini: Being 2001, I'd just gotten the Honda on Sept. 6th. I'd only been riding for a few weeks.

Matte Black: In 2001 I had a KZ1000 with rusty wheels. Turns out the charging system didn't really work. But my riding buddy's bike had the same battery that mine did. So we swapped batteries every so often. Ran like that the whole weekend, no problem.

Tina Lefauve: I used a nylon bag for luggage on my Laverda 3C, which melted onto my pipe. I felt stupid, but I thought, I've got this beautiful bike and I'm out riding it, and that's what it's all about.

Amanda Scampini: The second TWALD, my bike lost power somewhere on US 20. Some trucker gave Bob some wire to hot-wire it. Then we hit rain. Then I hit a raccoon. We arrived after midnight, cold, wet and really tired.

Brett Kurtz: The first year I rode up, a cold front came through. I stopped and put on every article of clothing I had. I got lost and finally got there at 2 a.m. Some bank clock showed 27 F. I took a hot shower for an hour to stop shaking. Good times.

Tina Lefauve: We went to this ski area in Galena with all our gear on and rode the bobsled run. It was this plastic half-pipe on these mechanical sleds with a brake. Some people got really out of control. But the people who owned it were OK with it since we had gear on.

Amanda Scampini: The downhill luge competition started at Chestnut Mountain. All these kids were going down the hill in shorts and tank tops, but we went down in full motorcycle gear.

Bob Burns: Everybody had such a great time, we had to do it next year. Well, when? "Two Weeks After Labor Day" was a pain in the ass to type. So that's how TWALD came to be.

"Let's go somewhere cheaper."

Bob Burns: The second year at Galena, we had 40 bikes. We thought, "We had a great time, but next year let's go somewhere cheaper and farther away." So we scouted



Saturday morning pre-ride meet-up at the Hubl. Have fun. Don't crash.



ANDERS CARLSON



BOB BURNS

Left to right: Minor BMW surgery, Dr. Dave Strauss presiding. Bruce Hayner exploring vehicular alternatives at Chestnut Mountain.

presidential campaign. John was born about 9 months later. The famous photo of Wild Bill Gelbke on the world's largest motorcycle was taken across the river from Boscobel, at the junction of Highway 60/61.

Matte Black: On the third year in Boscobel, the Sands became the overflow to the Hubl.

Kris Baustert: And then the partying got weirder.

"Stuff will happen."

Norm Hogeveen: Three tips: Don't try to keep up with the guy in front of you. Enjoy the curvy roads of the country. Don't drink too much.

Bob Burns: Somebody said, "We should have a countdown saying it's been this many years since the last incident." No way. When you take 100 people and this is the one time they take their bike out and make it do what it's supposed to do — they're going to turn it up. Stuff will happen.

Dan Waite: That's the beauty of TWALD. Everybody pushes themselves all day long. That's how you get better.

Andrew McCarthy: It helps that many of us have track experience.

Kris Baustert: You get real comfortable with turn markers. Twenty miles per hour means you can go about 40mph,

30mph means you go about 50mph, 40mph means wide open.

Matte Black: We got busted the first year at Boscobel. We were like 30 bikes or so. My license was expired and I'd just built this Honda double overhead cam with no gauges or mirrors, no registration and a borrowed plate. It had lights, though. In 15 minutes I brought up so many issues, the cop gave us a warning and told us to take it easy.

Brady Polowy: I was in a fast group. According to GPS, we averaged 68mph — with stopping. Going through a turn, I fixated on the guardrail I didn't want to hit. Which I hit. Shattered my visor and broke my hand. Bent the handlebars and had to remove the centerstand so it would ride home. And it did, thanks to Karsten Illg.

Tina Lefauve: I wanted to see if my Vincent could do the ton. There wasn't a speed trap, so I wound her up to 90-95mph. When it misfired, I was like, "Wait, there's a tuning opportunity here." How can you find out if your Vincent doesn't run well at 90mph in Cook County?

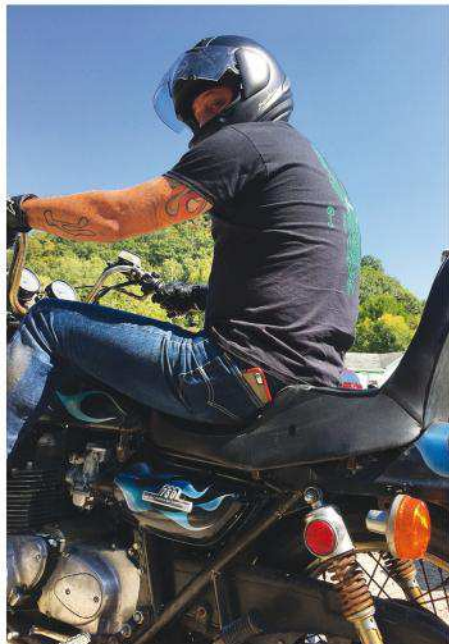
Matte Black: Brett Kurtz is a badass rider on his trick Speed Triple. But Brett totally blew a corner at 60mph. He just went straight.

Brett Kurtz: I had a nasty sinus infection and wasn't on my

BRADY POLOWY

Jason Koschnitzke's Datsun 240Z complementing its 2-wheeled brethren.

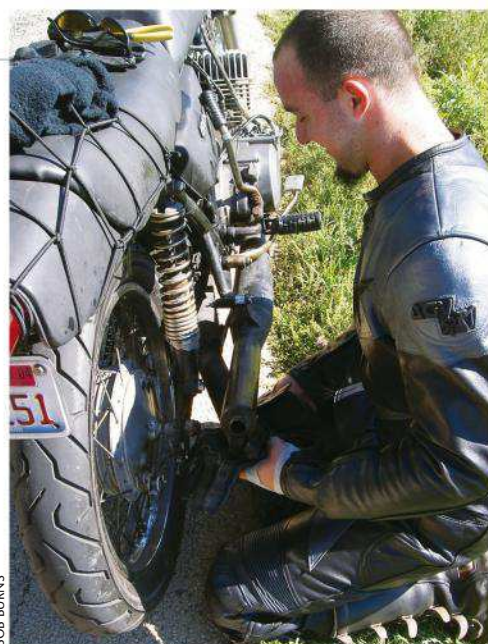




ANDERS CARLSON



BOB BURNS



Chadwick's blue-flamed Kawasaki Z2 750; Thruxton crash damage; Matte Black fixing his H1 with barbed wire.

game. I don't recommend crashing while leading a group of new riders. The bike was completely unscathed, though. It landed in really tall grass. Not a scratch on it. It took four of us to lift it out.

Kris Baustert: Tall grass is called a "Wisconsin Air Fence."

Bob Burns: One year, this first year guy put his bike in a ditch near Madison. A local guy with a pickup truck was nice enough to haul his bike to Hubl's, then took the injured guy to the urgent care center. He bought the pickup owner a case of beer and a tank of gas. Fair and affordable.

Matte Black: The worst crash was this guy on a 400F, who was heading back to the Sands. He got a Medevac flight out of there. I think he had a punctured lung. Don't think he rides anymore.

"Sorry I blew up your bike."

Ira Cox: This year Andrew's exhaust baffle flew out at me at 70mph, which we actually found. He fixed it with a Christmas tree stand found in a ditch. Then my CB750 chain wore out. Muscodet Dave's tip was to buy a new one at the farm implement store. So I only missed an hour of riding.

Andrew Golding: I won the MacGyver award this year, because of the Christmas tree stand fix. The trophy was a roll of camouflage duct tape. You can't see the fix!

Matte Black: I had my Harley one year, but somebody suggested riding my friend Daniela's CB350. So my girlfriend got on and we took off. Unfortunately, the group was mostly liter bikes. I tried to keep up, despite my girlfriend hitting my helmet and yelling at me. It held together nice until we hit a town, dropped a valve and it died. Sorry I blew up your bike, Daniela.

Amanda Scampini: While picking up a dead bike a few towns away, Baustert's bike broke down. We picked up three bikes that weren't ours with three trailers, plus two more. Baustert took my Honda with a king/queen seat and sissy bar. Then our van broke down. That's how I met Kristin, Miriam, Melissa and Jason.

Jason Koschnitzke: The first year, Melissa and I took a CB160 and CB200. Turns out that was a poor choice. Small bikes are fun unless you want to go somewhere far.

Kris Baustert: The year Matt J. rode his Harley bagger we had to pull over to keep reattaching his sideboards



MATTE BLACK

Matte Black's Kawasaki KZ, customized by the Toecutter.



ANDERS CARLSON

The outcome of a bit of late night hijinks at the Hubl. Beer was surely not involved in any of the planning for this stunt.



KEVIN LAW HORN



KEVIN LAW HORN

Left to right: Klassy KZ1000 with a beautiful Vetter fairing and period cooler; Bosco Bill and his Flathead Ford custom.

because he kept grinding them into the pavement. He also had an inflatable doll on the back all weekend.

Tina Lefauve: I took my Vincent one year. We got it up there but a carb wouldn't stop leaking. Bosco Bill happened upon us and made a Franken-gasket that's still in the bike.

Fred Cousins: Riding with David Venkus, my Ducati started running poorly. So we pulled over. David asked me, "Did it drop a cylinder?" My Ducati was a single. If this isn't sidesplitting hilarious, you haven't spent enough time with David.

Jen Burns: One year I lost my phone, my lucky hat, and my purse, which was a camouflage bag. Being Wisconsin, I found my phone by just calling it and having the nice guy who answered it drop it off at the bar I'm at. And I found the lucky hat on the side of the road. The camouflage bag, being camouflage, was never found. Natch.

Bob Burns: I took one last 30-minute ride. I'd had such a great day. So I made it 4 miles from the hotel, and a deer tagged me. He bounced off me and ran off. This was the second deer I hit. The first deer I hit was a doe, and I was on my Triumph Tiger. Me and the bike weighed a half ton, so I ran that deer over.

Matte Black: What's more ridiculous to ride than a Kawasaki H1? It was the most hated bike ever, because it had chambers and it blew oil all over anybody behind me. On day two, one of the chambers vibrated off, so we "liberated" barbed wire from a fence to remount it.

Fred Cousins: The wonderful part about TWALD is being left alone. Dumbasses who can't maintain a bike don't get past DuPage County. I don't mind helping someone who's had a spill or a flat tire. But if you show up on a bike leaking oil with a bald tire, you deserve to be mocked. Ninety-nine percent of people manage repairs by themselves and don't need my help.

Bob Burns: "TWALD sucks, stay home" started as a joke. "No, don't come, you'll hate all these nice roads and fun times." One year I said nothing about TWALD to see if people would show up on their own. Big mistake. Lots of regulars never made reservations and got their rooms snatched out from under them. Which actually did suck — for them.

"The cops were there in two minutes."

Fred Cousins: A good way to survive TWALD? Moderation.

Bob Burns: Don't drink too much because it ruins the next day of riding. Or do. It's up to you. For some, it's a weekend to get loose and have a good time. Party until 3 a.m., sleep until 2 p.m. and ride less than 100 miles. But as far as I'm concerned, take your bike, cram clothes and a toothbrush into a bag and really go someplace. See something.

Jason Koschnitzke: One year I drove my 1970 Datsun 240Z. Turns out I was overwhelmingly welcome. I had a blast driving the back roads all day. I also loved being dry. Somehow every year it rains on the ride home.

Kris Baustert: One time, some folks took a spare gas tank and filled it with acetylene and placed it across the street from the Sands. They lit a fuse and didn't tell anyone. Boscobel police have an amazing response time.

Tina Lefauve: One year while drunk we decided we needed to see the river, right across the street. We decided to cross under the road, through the culvert, with no lights.

Kevin Hansing: We saw this hunting shack by the river, and Darren and Klobber and I decided to check it out. Darren got poison ivy all over him.

That was the first "Walk in The Woods."

Tina Lefauve: The next year, I brought weird junk to the woods for newbies to "discover." Then someone made all these Blair Witch stick sculptures. Really freaked people out. The Walk in the Woods became the mandatory newbie ritual.

Kris Baustert: We brought Roman candles one year. The cops were there in two minutes and confiscated everything we had. That's why we took up shooting BB guns.

Bob Burns: Part of the reason the event works is that we have a pretty aggressive "no a**hole" policy. Only a handful of people — three — have even been officially uninvited. The first guy I tossed was a challenge. But it got a lot easier after that.

"I got engaged at TWALD."

Amanda Scampini: Kevin and I went to the Dairy Queen and sat on the little hill behind it eating our ice cream. He leaned



KEVIN LAW HORN

The running joke at TWALD never fools anyone.



Escape to here, repeat annually as necessary.

over, showed me the ring and asked if I'd marry him.

Kevin Hansing: It just kind of happened that way. Every year since, we go back to that Dairy Queen.

Chad "Chadwick" Dennis: The most achingly wonderful, transcendent thing that ever happened at TWALD? Two things. First, I decided to go streaking through Bob's speech. Second, the following year they made T-shirts and stickers of said event.

Jason Koschnitzke: My memorable moment is the same every year. I get the same room, number 13, right in the sweet spot of the Sands Motel. I've had that same room almost since the start. Each year I open the door to room 13, knowing the weekend has just begun.

Amanda Scampini: It's such a great group of people that I always look forward to sitting outside the motels or around

the bonfire and catching up. It's the only time of year I see some of them.

Brett Kurtz: TWALD is a state of mind. Every time I go riding outside of the city with friends we represent the spirit of TWALD.

Chad "Chadwick" Dennis: I get to spend time with some of the most important people in my life, people who have shaped my middle age with vintage motorcycles, racing, a new career path and some of the best stories ever.

Bob Burns: From time to time, incidents and behavior make me consider giving it up. But then we get around the fire on Saturday night and I see all these people having a great time all weekend because I said, "Hey guys, let's go ride motorcycles." There's no way I'm stopping this thing any time soon. **MC**

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ARTISANAL AMBITIONS

Janus Gryffin

Story and photos by Richard Backus

The last decade has seen an explosion in handcrafted, artisanal products, including craft breweries, craft distilleries, artisanal coffee, farm-to-table organic food — and now, motorcycles.

In the current climate, the idea of production, craft-built motorcycles seems a natural. As consumers gravitate to products that promise quality and a level of exclusivity, the market for goods that are something more than just another widget extruded from a factory pipeline continues to grow.

The indie build movement is an obvious reflection of this, a turn away from the boring, overhyped, hyper tech, cookie-cutter motorcycles cluttering the mainstream market. As individual expressions of what a motorcycle should be, it was only a matter of time before someone tried to extend that aesthetic beyond the single, owner-built special. In the small Midwestern town of Goshen, Indiana (population roughly 34,000), Janus Motorcycles (janusmotorcycles.com) is making a name for itself with a line of small, handcrafted, 250cc motorcycles.

Founded by partners Devin Biek and Richard Worsham in 2011, Janus' roots are in mopeds, which goes a long way in explaining Biek and Worsham's enthusiasm for small-bore bikes. The pair met up in 2008 when Worsham started working with Biek, who was then running Motion Left Mopeds, a small business restoring and customizing mopeds, and also supplying performance moped parts, notably high quality expansion chambers. As the business expanded and Biek took on more custom build work, the pair got the idea to build a complete machine of their own design.

In line with their moped roots and an enthusiasm for vintage race bikes, their first complete motorcycle, the Paragon, was powered by a 50cc air-cooled moped engine housed in a triangulated GP-style frame. That led to the retro-cued Halcyon, with a scaled-down Norton Featherbed-inspired frame housing a 50cc, 6-speed, water-cooled Derbi engine. After building 43 examples of that bike they decided it was time for a bit more motive power, and in 2015 they introduced the Halcyon 250, still with the same old-school looks that had made the 50cc Halcyon popular, but now powered by a counter-balanced 229cc air-cooled, overhead valve, 5-speed, Chinese-made single. That bike was joined by the café-racer styled Phoenix 250, using the same 229cc engine and leading-link front end, but equipped with a swingarm rear suspension in place of the Halcyon's hardtail.

Gryffin

That brings us to the Gryffin, Janus' newest offering. A street-enduro-styled bike, it uses the same mechanical





JANUS

GRYFFIN
250



Hefty aluminum bash plate is a nice touch (above), as is the leather cover on the battery (far right).

underpinning as the Phoenix. The differences are in the details, of which there are many, including a unique gas tank and seat, an upswept exhaust set high on the left instead of running low on the right, a bash plate, and of course the requisite knobby tires for dirt duty.

Brakes are the same 250mm disc, dual-piston caliper in the front and single 220mm disc, single-piston caliper in the rear as on the Halcyon and Phoenix. The front suspension is Janus' own leading-link design, adopted from the start of 250 production because of frustration with off-the-shelf telescopic forks. Quality fork sets for big bikes are



2018 JANUS GRYFFIN

Engine: 229cc air-cooled OHV single, 67mm x 65mm bore and stroke, 9.2:1 compression ratio, 14hp @ 7,000rpm (claimed)

Top speed: 70mph (as tested)

Carburetion: Single 30mm Keihin w/accelerator pump

Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/Wheelbase: Dual downtube cradle frame/53in (1,342mm)

Suspension: Leading-link, dual Ikon shocks w/adjustable preload front, dual Ikon shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: 9.8in (250mm) single disc front, 8.7in (220mm) single disc rear

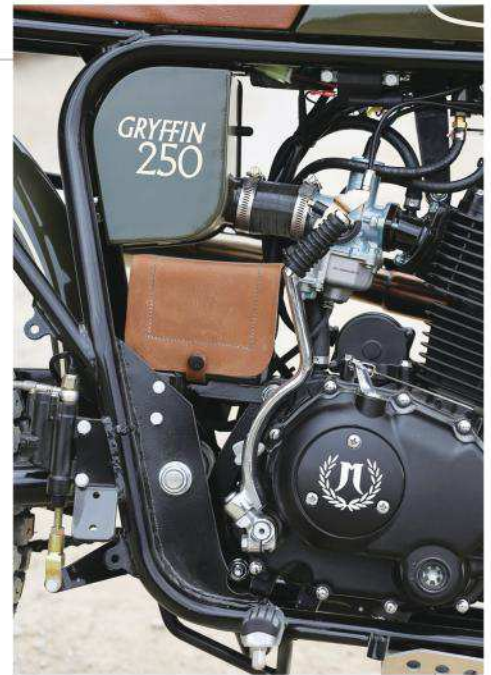
Tires: 3 x 18in front, 3.5 x 18in rear

Weight (dry): 265lb (120kg)

Seat height: 32in (813mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 2.4gal (9ltr)/55-75mpg (est.)

Price: \$6,995



readily available, but the smaller end of the spectrum isn't well served, so Biek and Worsham decided to design and manufacture their own front end.

The decision gave them several benefits. For one, they could control the

look of the front end. Janus motorcycles are designed to evoke memories of days gone by, of a simpler time of simple machines made for fun, an aesthetic the leading-link setup underscores. For another, Biek and Worsham are deeply focused on quality, something the telescopic forks they were getting just didn't





supply. By designing and building their own (like much of the fabrication work, the forks and swingarms are fabricated by local Amish craftsmen working in diesel generator-powered shops), Biek and Worsham have total quality control, ensuring that every set is made like the last.

Custom-calibrated Ikon shock absorbers control the front and rear suspensions, with custom aluminum-rimmed, billet aluminum hub wheels built for Janus in Washington. In fact, outside of the engine and switchgear, most of the Griffin's parts are locally sourced from companies in Indiana, most of them within 20 miles or so of Janus' Goshen headquarters. The wiring and wiring harness are made locally, and the frames, gas tanks, swingarms and seats — including the custom leather saddles and saddlebags — are all fabricated at local Amish shops to Janus' specification, with all work overseen by Biek and Worsham. Final assembly happens in the Janus shop, where bikes are certified before being shipped to customers, ready to start. There are no dealers, as Biek and Worsham want to work directly with their customers.

On the trail

So how does all this translate to the street? Or trail, as the Griffin suggests by its styling? As we discovered in an afternoon riding the Griffin, it is, not too surprisingly, more in its element bombing around town than down your favorite gravel road. Much of that

comes down to the suspension, which we think needs to be a bit softer and with more travel for true backcountry work. Getting the suspension dialed in just right is as much art as science, something Biek and Worsham both appreciate, and it gets a bit harder working with a small and light machine (265 pounds dry) like the Griffin. Long-travel suspension would go a long way toward solving the Griffin's perceived shortcomings in the dirt, but it would also result in a tall, ungainly looking machine.

Ridden with that in mind, the Griffin works great as the occasional backroad bomber. Steering is light and direct, and the chassis feels well sorted and of a piece. Balance front and rear is excellent, and it's easy to push your body around to get more or less weight — and traction — where you want it. The little 229cc single fires up on the button, needing only a short bit of warm up before you switch the choke off and head out. And yes, the Griffin is carbureted, something of a rarity anymore, but hardly a negative, the Keihin pumper carb delivering crisp fueling hot or cold.

Considering its small displacement, we thought engine performance was quite good. There's not much happening in the lower numbers, so you need to give it a little throttle for a quick launch, but once you're up to speed and in the engine's sweet zone — probably around 3,500rpm or so; there is no tach — it pulls readily and



The Griffin is great fun on back roads, although we'd like more suspension for a smoother ride.



Using their own design leading-link front end gives Janus control over quality, and it works very well.



cleanly. In fact, get the revs moving and the little single is really fun, a nice, raucous exhaust note streaming from the beautiful handmade, stainless steel exhaust system. The exhaust heat guard is fully functional, never getting too hot to touch even with the heat of the little catalytic converter welded into the system. Top speed is a claimed 70mph, a number we can verify, and the Gryffin is surprisingly comfortable at a steady 60mph, although it definitely smooths out if you drop that down to 50mph or so.

Not surprisingly, 50mph and below is where the bike really excels, and around town it's an absolute blast. Light, with quick reflexes and enough power to maneuver in traffic, it's a hoot as a bar hopper or errand shopper. Stopping is a two-finger affair thanks to the Gryffin's nicely weighted and amply powerful front disc brake, which made the rear disc brake's wooden performance stand out. Biek took the blame for our bike's rear

brake, admitting he'd overheated the disc in an overly enthusiastic bid to bed the pads in, which registered true looking at the discolored rear disc. We wouldn't expect that to be an issue on customer bikes, and keep in mind that the bike we rode was Gryffin No. 2, a production prototype that's been ridden hard to shake out potential problems before they reach customers.

Biek and Worsham are satisfied with the direction they're heading. They've built and sold around 150 of the 250s, with the Halcyon the most popular by far, something that has actually surprised the partners as they expected the Phoenix to take that title. We think the new Gryffin will challenge the Halcyon's popularity, blending as it does classic street-enduro style with vintage simplicity. At \$6,995 it's priced higher than other small-bore singles like the Royal Enfield Bullet, but its handcrafted status puts it on a slightly different plane, a hand-built motorcycle rooted in the past but built for the present. **MC**

The Gryffin and Halcyon No. 1, which is still ridden regularly and used as a development hack.





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Straight out of the Eighties: Dr. John Wittner (left) and racer Doug Brauneck.



IL DOTTORE

Dr. John's Moto Guzzi Daytona racer

Story by Alan Cathcart Photos by Phil Masters

Thirty years ago in 1988, Moto Guzzi's hi-cam, 4-valve-per-cylinder engine made its public debut in the U.S. Battle of the Twins competition, finally reaching production for customer sale in 1992. The saga of American dentist Dr. John Wittner and his Moto Guzzi racers is a motorcycling fairy tale that put the mercurial Italo-Argentinian Alejandro De Tomaso, then owner of Moto Guzzi, in the unlikely role of a fairy godfather.

In his spare time from dentistry, Wittner had played with tuning Harley-Davidson engines, mainly for road racing around the northeast. But in 1983 he decided to buy a Moto Guzzi Le Mans, if for no other reason than he thought it looked neat, and also had a pushrod engine like the Harleys he was used to. Trained as a mechanical engineer before taking up dentistry, Wittner appreciated the Guzzi's rugged engineering and traditional looks. "I bought the bike with the sole intent of

forming a team of friends to go endurance road racing with it," Wittner says today, still living in the same suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he ran his race team. "I knew they were extraordinarily reliable, the perfect weapon for Endurance competition."

Team Guzzi

In its first year of competition, Dr. John's team won the 1984 U.S. Endurance Championship's Middleweight class, with a 100 percent finishing record. The following season, in 1985, after Wittner sold his dental practice to concentrate on bike racing, Dr. John's Guzzi team won the overall 13-race U.S. Endurance title outright, beating a fleet of Japanese fours that were occasionally slower and always thirstier than the pushrod V-twin, a fatal combination in long-distance events.

The next year, Wittner's fortunes slumped as he looked further afield for new challenges. The lack of suitable races outside the U.S. where he could race the Moto Guzzi in 1986 meant he hardly raced at all, and his money was fast running out. Almost flat broke after two seasons, Wittner took a final, desperate gamble. Staking everything he had left on a one-way air ticket to Italy, he camped on the doorstep of Moto Guzzi boss Alejandro de Tomaso at his private hotel in Modena — and got lucky. "I went with the intent of staying two weeks, but got so involved that I didn't return home for two months," Wittner says. "One December morning, I woke up and remembered I'd left my car in the airport long-term parking lot. It cost me a fistful of dollars to extract it!"

The 4-valve

De Tomaso recognized in Wittner the man who could help rejuvenate Moto Guzzi's staid image, and when Wittner returned to the U.S. he had a box of business cards identifying him as Moto Guzzi's "Engineering Development Consultant, North America" — plus enough money to build the Stage 3 Guzzi racer he'd mapped out before his visit, complete with an all-new box-section spine frame and cantilever swingarm with floating shaft final drive. The



MOTO GUZZI 1000R 4-VALVE

Engine: 999cc air-cooled SOHC transverse 90-degree V-twin, 4 valves per cylinder, 95.25mm x 70mm bore and stroke, 11.25:1 compression ratio, 115hp @ 9,300rpm

Top speed: 166mph (Daytona 1989)

Carburetion: Two 41.5mm flat-slide Mikuni

Transmission: 5-speed, shaft final drive

Electrics: 12v, Dyna S/Raceco electronic CDI

Frame/wheelbase: Chrome-moly square-section backbone frame with aluminum side plates/57.5in (1,460mm)

Suspension: Telescopic front forks with single centrally mounted fully adjustable Koni F1 shock, box-section steel cantilever monoshock rear with fully adjustable Koni F1 shock

Brakes: Dual 11.8in (300mm) Brembo floating cast iron discs front, single 9in (230mm) Brembo floating cast iron disc rear

Tires: 120/70 x 17in front, 170/55 x 17in rear

Weight: 347lb (158kg) with oil, no fuel

rest is history: in 1987, in the hands of rider Doug Brauneck, Dr. John's Guzzi broke the six-year Ducati/Harley-Davidson domination of U.S. Pro Twins, winning the AMA Championship title and becoming



The Marzocchi forks housed the springs. Damping was via a fully adjustable gas-charged Koni F1 shock.

the most successful Moto Guzzi racer since the factory had stopped Grand Prix racing in 1957. De Tomaso was so delighted he gave Wittner one of the two prototype 4-valve-per-cylinder V-twin engines Guzzi engineers had been working on for the past two years to build a race bike around, to help Guzzi ready a production version.

The 4-valve Guzzi ridden by Brauneck finished third in its very first race at Daytona in March 1988. That finish came without the bike ever having turned a wheel under its own power until the second day of practice, with the engine still in prototype street form and tuning restricted to open exhausts, a pair of camshafts from Crane Cams, twin 41.5mm flat-slide Mikuni carbs and nothing else. During the rest of that season, Wittner and Brauneck ran increasingly strongly to place fifth in the final points table, but inevitably encountered the usual R&D problems expected with a new engine — which after all was the point of going racing with it.

Overall, the 4-valve was faster and better than the previous year's 2-valve title-winner — and having sampled both the previous 1985 Endurance title-winning and 1987 Pro Twins champion 2-valve pushrod Dr. John Guzzis, I was invited to the Loudon track in August 1988 to evaluate the 4-valve. It had now adopted the Daytona name, presumably by virtue of its rostrum finish first time out, and this was the first journalist test of an engine seemingly destined to form the backbone of Guzzi's future road bike range.

The 4-valve engine was designed by Umberto Todero, a former aide to legendary Guzzi designer Giulio Carcano, in 1986 as a cost-efficient option for Guzzi's future. It used the same crankcases and longitudinal plain-bearing crank as Moto Guzzi's 2-valve big twins, although the first test prototypes had extra metal welded in after casting, but before heat treatment, to allow a wider spread of cylinder studs for the 4-valve cylinder heads. The central camshaft on the pushrod engine was replaced with a crank-driven countershaft driving two 19mm-wide Pirelli toothed rubber belts up the



The Moto Guzzi 1000R 4-valve made its debut at Daytona in March 1988. Rider Dave Brauneck finish third in the race that day.

front of the engine, which directly drove the end of the single camshaft positioned in the side of each cylinder head. Looking at the engine with the fairing off, it didn't really look like an overhead camshaft design, more a high-cam layout like a 175/250cc Parilla or a BMW/Bristol car engine. "Not so!" Wittner says. "I agree it's not obvious, but the camshaft is in fact entirely located above the combustion chamber, and uses only cam followers, not pushrods."

The camshaft actually lay alongside the exhaust port, almost parallel with the exhaust pipe's exit, permitting Todero to avoid adding unduly to the height of the already quite tall engine. At right angles to the camshaft were two long rocker arms operated by round-radiused cam followers, with forks on the rockers actuating the paired valves. These had a much narrower 44-degree included angle than the pushrod twins, and on the Dr. John engine were each 0.5mm larger than on the factory prototype (34mm inlets/30mm exhausts), operated by uprated special-profile camshafts from Crane Cams. Twin separate megaphone exhausts for faster tracks were welded up by Rob Muzzy to replace the factory-made titanium 2-into-1 pipe used at Daytona. Dyna S/Raceco

electronic ignition (total loss, to save the weight of an alternator) was fitted, running 31-34 degrees advance.

The 4-valve engine was just 40mm wider than the 2-valve, thanks mainly to the bulkier valve covers needed to enclose the extra valve gear, and Wittner says it was only 12 pounds heavier than the pushrod design. Frontwards weight bias was a steep 55/45 percent, good for

"The most notable thing about the 4-valve engine was how freely it revved."

promoting front wheel grip in turns, with a very compacted mass that aided changing direction.

When it finally reached the marketplace in 1992 it produced 92 horsepower at 7,400rpm in 992cc form. Wittner ran it in this guise at Daytona in 1988. However, in pursuit of the higher revs at which he believed the 4-valve heads would come into their own, Wittner short-stroked the engine after Daytona for a full 999cc — the same dimensions as his 1987 2-valve

Le Mans-derived BoTT title-winner.

Crankshaft power increased to 115 horsepower at 9,300rpm during the 1988 season, and for 1989 the engine was fuel injected with a Magneti Marelli ECU and twin 52mm Weber throttle bodies. With new Crane cams, Wiseco flat-top pistons and re-reported cylinder heads with modified combustion chambers, the 4-valve engine ultimately delivered 128 horsepower at the gearbox at 9,500rpm, good for a top speed of 167mph at Daytona. Brauneck retired two laps from the end of the 1989 race with a broken cam belt while running fourth: reliability had become an issue. This led to Wittner retiring from racing at the end of that season, moving to Italy to work full time on development of the Daytona 1000 street version of his racer.

On track

When I rode the Dr. John 4-valve Guzzi, the engine was reluctant to rev as high as the 10,000rpm peak Wittner had been told it was supposedly capable of. Midrange performance was its strong point, with the engine coming strongly alive at 5,200rpm, with a strong build of power as it revved eagerly to around 9,000rpm, and maximum torque available

at just 7,300rpm, according to Wittner. But at just over nine grand it ran out of breath, which meant that the benefits of the design weren't yet as great as they should have been. Still, there was a notable improvement in overall performance over the old 2-valve pushrod engine, which delivered 103 horsepower at the crank in race form.

Wittner used his own design of floating rear end to eliminate torque reaction from the shaft final drive, producing a bike with a lengthways crank and shaft drive that felt like an across-the-frame twin with a chain. Only by revving the engine at rest in neutral did you feel any trace of torque reaction as the bike rocked from side to side. Clutch it and the effect disappeared, and on the track the Guzzi's behavior was completely neutral, with no understeer, nor any rear wheel hop under engine braking. This meant you could

enter a turn fully committed, yet back off the throttle to change line to avoid a slower rider without any noticeable effect on handling.

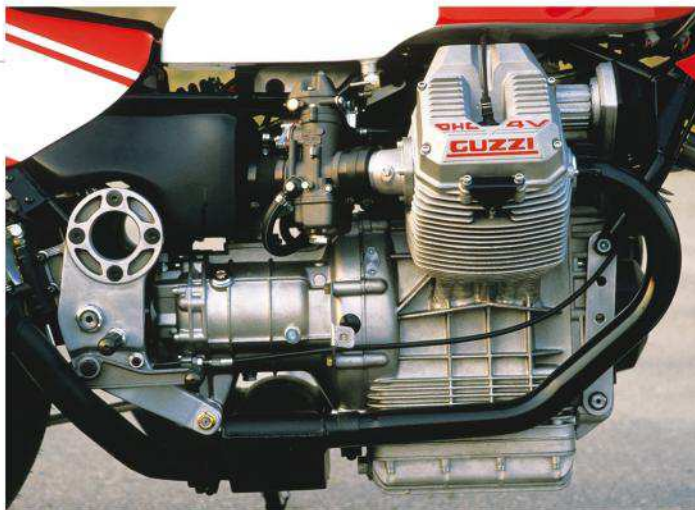
The close-ratio factory gearbox had a one-up left-foot change that was smoother than previous Guzzi gearshifts I'd encountered, but the bottom three gears were closely spaced, with quite a large gap to fourth, and again to fifth. This setup may have worked at Daytona, but on a tight track like Loudon it was a bit of a handicap on the light Dr. John bike, which even in 4-valve form scaled at only 347 pounds with oil, but no fuel.

The most noticeable thing about the 4-valve engine was how freely it revved,

The cylinder heads of the prototype Daytona 1000 proudly advertise the four valves hiding inside.

the tachometer needle flying round the dial almost as eagerly as a 2-stroke. Conditioned to think of previous Guzzi racers I'd ridden as mega-tractors with the grunt of a Caterpillar, it came as a surprise to find myself seated aboard this easy-revving, light-feeling bike that, for all its apparent bulk, felt almost delicate in operation. It spun up easily and freely, rather than slugging its way to higher revs.

That applied equally to the chassis. With a wheelbase of 57.5 inches (1,460mm) this was not a short bike, but it was actually much smaller than you imagined at first glance. The chassis on the 4-valve racer was a slightly modified evolution of Wittner's 1987 BoTT title-winning frame, consisting of a central rectangular-section backbone attached at right angles to a 2-1/2-inch steel tube located transversely along the swing-arm pivot. This carried half-inch-thick



Doug Brauneck
aboard the Moto
Guzzi 4-valve racer.



aluminum plates bolted to it either side, which located the gearbox as well as acting as the pivot for the box-section cantilever monoshock swingarm with fully adjustable Koni F1 shock pivoting on the frame backbone.

The engine was a semi-stressed member, bolted to two triangulated tubular steel subframes that were in turn bolted to the subframe, and was tipped back 2 degrees from horizontal to rationalize the angle of operation of the universal joints in the articulated drive shaft. It was also offset a half-inch to the right to fit a specially made 5.5-inch-wide cast aluminum 17-inch Marvic rear wheel shod, like the front, with a Metzeler radial slick. This let you get the power down much earlier coming out of turns via the still pretty skinny 170/55 x 17-inch rear Metzeler than was possible with the previous 18-inch rear.

Nevertheless, the way the 4-valve Guzzi put the power down at Loudon was very impressive. The cantilever rear end soaked up all but the most obscene bumps, and had been set up with just the desirable amount of anti-squat to make the most of the radial tire. The fully adjustable Koni unit was well dialed in and seemed really compliant, delivering responsive feedback as it hooked up, without bottoming out in the dip at the bottom of the steep hill.

Up front, the 41.3mm Marzocchi MIR forks Wittner previously employed had been gutted, leaving only the springs

inside the fork tubes, the sliders merely providing a convenient means of locating the front wheel. Damping was via a fully adjustable gas-charged Koni F1 shock mounted externally in front of the headstock, quickly and easily adjustable for fine tuning.

The 4-valve Guzzi stopped superbly, thanks to the linked brake system that saw the front lever perform all braking functions front and rear — there was no foot brake pedal. It was desirable on the Dr. John Guzzi to get all your braking done in a straight line, then pitch the bike decisively into the corner under power, rather

“Too often people associated with a struggling company are maligned as being mediocre, or even worse.”

than trail-brake into the turn. In spite of the extreme forward weight bias, the Guzzi didn't like that, as I found when the slightly hard front Metzeler slid away a couple of times at excessive entry speed, but it did respond well to a firm hand on the throttle, powering out of a bend with a glorious thunder from those twin open pipes. The brake balance was usually set at 90/10 percent forward, using a Kelsey-Hayes proportioning valve.

Production Daytona

Three similar bikes, chassis-wise, but with pushrod engines based on the 1987 title-winning engine producing 100 horsepower as delivered, were built by the factory for use in European BoTT racing. But Wittner was already looking ahead to the Daytona 1000 4-valve street bike, using a similar chassis to his Pro Twins racer. It was launched in November 1989 at the Milan Show, but for various Italianate reasons didn't enter production until 1992. By that time, Guzzi had been upstaged by their Ducati compatriots, who'd become serial winners of the World Superbike Championship with the 888 desmoquattro, and consequently the Daytona 1000 never received the acclaim it deserved.

Just 486 examples were built in the model's 1992 debut year, with numbers declining to 283 bikes in 1993, 155 in 1994, and only 100 in 1995. In 1996 the greatly revamped Daytona RS was launched, but Guzzi customers preferred the less costly pushrod 1100 Sport model of near-comparable performance, and so just 113 examples of the RS were made in 1996, and 195 in 1997. The introduction alongside it of the much better-selling and more accessible Centauro power cruiser powered by the same 4-valve engine ensured the sport bike's demise — until the advent of the bigger-engined MGS-01 prototype at the 2002 Milan Show turned a new page. It was a sad end to a project that had



Alan Cathcart on the prototype Daytona 1000 street bike in October 1989, just a week before it made its world debut at that year's Milan show.



The production Daytona kept the white mag wheels of the prototype, but when the 1000 debuted in 1992, it had lost its lower fairing.

started so well, with that Victory Lane finish back in 1988 that earned the Dr. John's 4-valve Daytona its name in its very first race.

Dr. John's 4-valve racer is now on permanent display in its 1991 final development form in the Moto Guzzi factory museum at Mandello del Lario. Wittner is currently in the process of restoring the 1987 2-valve AMA BoTT championship-winning bike, which he still owns, and when completed he plans to take it to the track in demo events, to record the contribution of the people he worked with at Moto Guzzi as the company struggled to survive. "I loved my time with Moto Guzzi and I miss the wonderful people there whom I was so honored and privileged to work with," Wittner says today. "They were the ones who kept Moto Guzzi alive through the most difficult times, with their hard work and faith in the company. They gave the best they had to give, and then gave some more. My very small story in the scope of the great history of Moto Guzzi would never have happened without them. Too often people associated with a struggling company are maligned as being mediocre, or even worse. For the people at Moto Guzzi back then, nothing could be further from the truth. I salute them." **MC**

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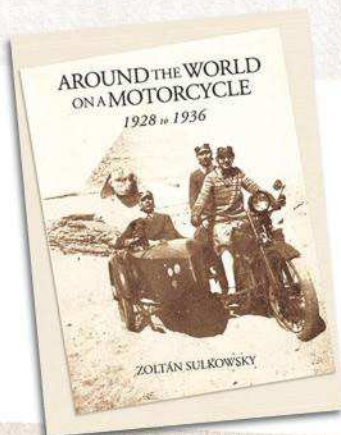
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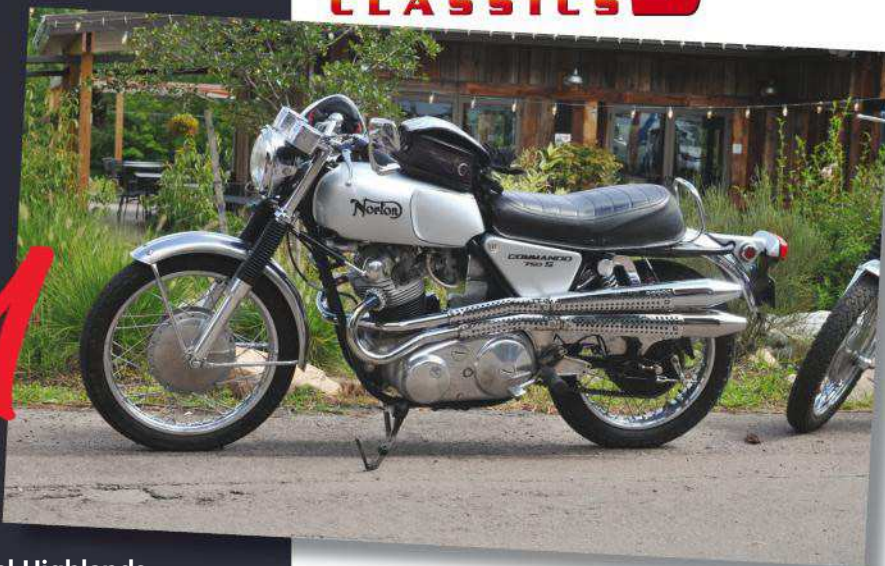
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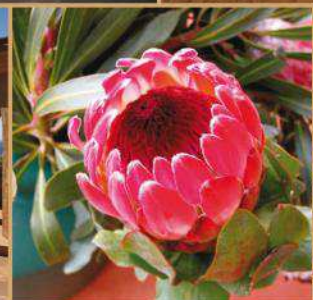
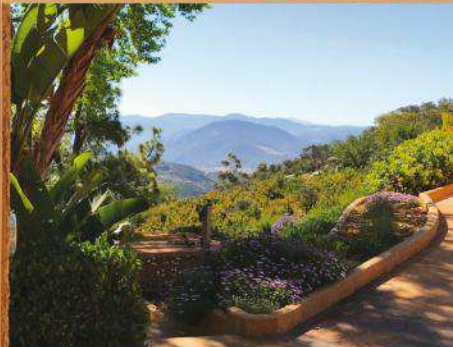
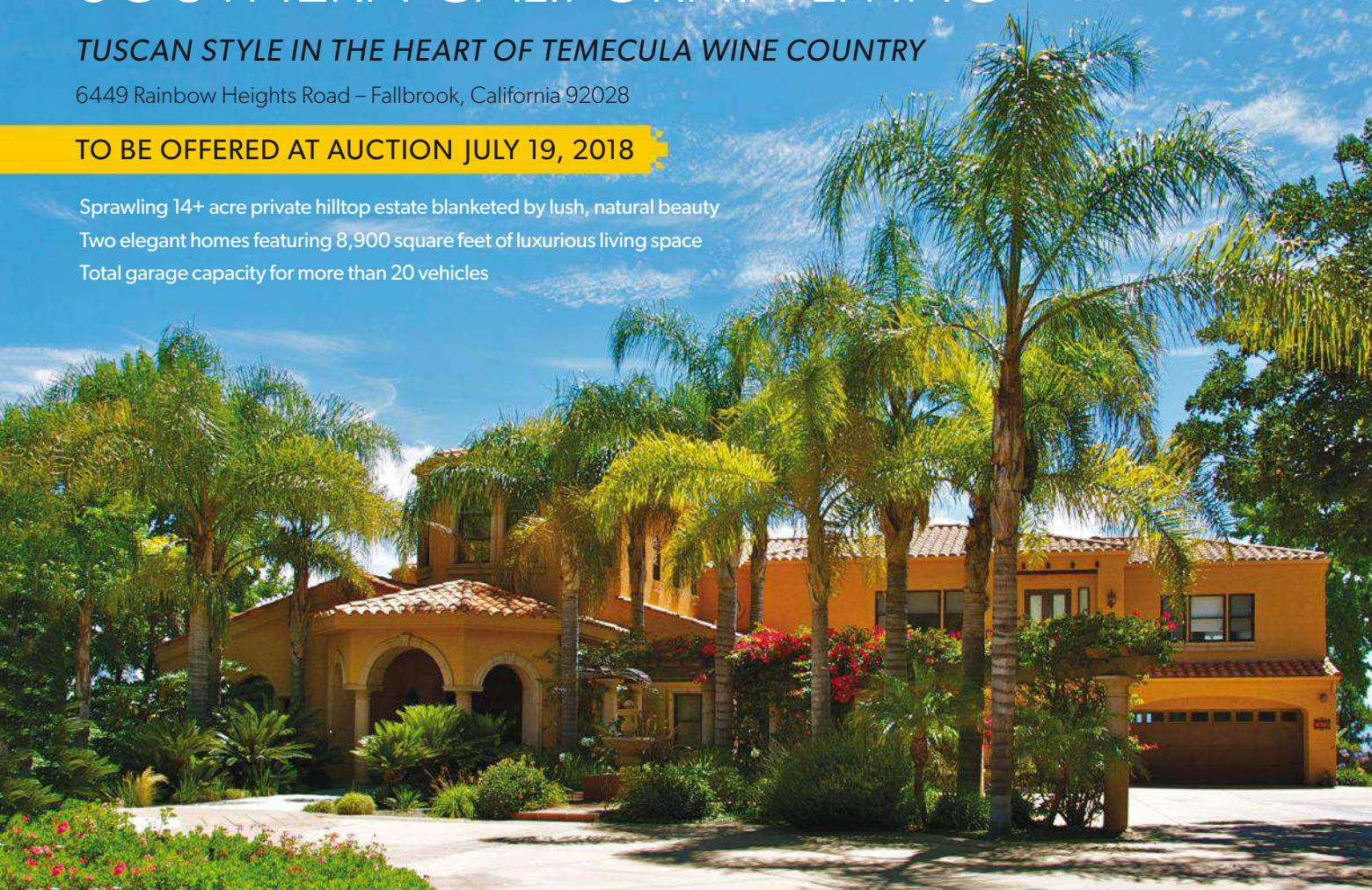
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“A mechanic’s stethoscope is a handy tool for chasing down odd noises.”

Seized cylinder

Q: I have the chance to buy a reasonably nice Suzuki GT550. I believe it is a 1976 model — one of the later disc-brake bikes — but the center cylinder on this triple is seized and I wondered if you have any thoughts on the best way to free it up?

Peter/via email

A: You can do a simple test to see if it is the piston seized in the bore (somewhat common and fixable) or a seized main bearing (unlikely, but probably a deal killer). If the seller will let you, take off the left side engine cover, and with the appropriate size wrench gently turn the nut at the end of the crankshaft back and forth. If there is some movement you can assume the main bearing is free. If it passes that test and you buy it, the next step will be to pull off the cylinder heads and have a look at the middle cylinder. If the piston is up you won’t be able to tell much, but if it is down you should be able to see if the bore is scored or scuffed, indicating a seizure while running. If none of the transfer ports are visible yet there is some room in the cylinder to hold liquid, the shade tree mechanic fix is to pour in a mixture of ATF and acetone and let it sit. After a decent interval of several days, you can again try to turn the crankshaft with the wrench, looking to see if the center piston moves at all. If the center piston isn’t at TDC you can also try tapping the center piston with a suitable sized wooden dowel and hammer. Easy does it. Repeat the solvent, wrench and tapping until you achieve success. Once it’s free, you can confirm if you’ll need a new piston or other work to get it running. Good luck!

Engine paint codes

Q: I’m slowly restoring a 1982 Kawasaki KZ1000R1 and am having difficulty identifying the correct black paint to use on the engine and carburetors. I’m under the impression that the paints used in 1982 no longer meet regulatory requirements in the U.S. and finding a suitable replacement is difficult. Any chance that you have insight on this matter and a source for the paint codes and type of paint?

Drew Jones/via email



Ready to take your classic queries: Old-bike mechanic Keith Fellenstein.

A: I’ve never worried too much about paint; it’s more important to get a heat-resistant paint. Most of the time I just use a quality brand spray paint made for BBQ grills. It’s meant to take the heat and has worked well.

SR500 challenges

Q: My 1979 Yamaha SR500 has a vacuum fuel petcock. I’ve found no way to eliminate it for a simple gravity-style petcock. I installed an inline fuel shut-off in the fuel line below the petcock. When I’m done riding, since the stock petcock has no “off” position and relies on engine vacuum to allow fuel flow, I turn the inline one to “off” and let the carburetor run dry to eliminate any gas going stale inside the carburetor. My problem is, when I go to start it, it takes anywhere from 5 to 20 kicks to get it started. The engine is running a 1980 Hi-Per-Kinetics Stage Two 650 stroker with 97mm x 88mm bore and stroke, a Megacycle 5120HP cam, Mikuni VM36 and other goodies.

I’ve owned three Yamaha TT500s, and they all had the on/off/reserve manual petcocks and all started first kick, hot or cold. How can I eliminate the funky stock petcock without replacing the tank? Does it require a lot of kicks to get the fuel flowing from the petcock because of the engine modifications? Should I just not run the carb dry after riding? I use octane booster and fuel preservative. The bike had sat for over 25 years when I bought it in 2012. The inside of the carburetor was surprisingly clean, with no gum at all.

David Fruhling/via email

A: It is taking so many kicks because there would normally be enough gas in the carburetor to start, then engine vacuum would open the petcock and refill the bowl before it ran dry. There should be a “PRI” or prime position on the petcock that bypasses the vacuum and flows gas to the carb for those instances when the bowls are dry, such as after a carb rebuild. After a little searching I found a good option at thevintagespoke.com. It’s an adapter that bolts directly to your tank and allows you to use a standard non-vacuum petcock. They also offer the petcock that fits the adapter, making it a one stop shop. Don’t forget to plug the vacuum port on the intake manifold.

A pinging noise

Q: I recently purchased a 1973 Kawasaki 350 S2A triple. I’m using regular gasoline. The issue I’m having is a pinging noise coming from cylinder No. 3. This pinging noise is more noticeable at low rpm (below 2,000rpm). What could be causing this problem?

Mario/via email

A: I suppose there could be a carbon spike glowing and pre-igniting cylinder No. 3, but having it happen at idle makes me think it’s something else, like a bearing rattle. Pinging usually occurs under moderate throttle while choosing a gear a little higher than conditions require. A mechanic’s stethoscope, available at Harbor Freight or any auto parts store, is a handy tool for chasing down odd noises coming from your engine, but a long screwdriver held against the engine case with the other end pressed to your temple can give similar results. What you’ll be listening for is the frequency of the sound. Is it every revolution or one in three? If you hear the sound on every revolution, then it’s probably bearing related, but if you only hear it every one in three it would be specific to that cylinder.

Email questions to keithsgarage@motorcycleclassics.com

Joe Rocket Rapid Transit tank bag and Wheel Jockey wheel lift

Travelling light: Joe Rocket Rapid Transit Recon 19 tank bag

Finding the right tank bag can be harder than you think. Over the years, I've used just about every type, from small day bags to huge expandable tank bags big enough to carry a week's laundry. The problem is, they all seem to have built-in limitations. A small tank bag is great if all you're carrying is your wallet and a few necessary items like keys, phone, glasses and the occasional extra from the store, but you can run out of room so fast a small bag suddenly becomes as much hassle as help. Big tank bags are great for long trips, or when you need to transport groceries — or laundry — but they're usually bulky and sometimes less than secure, especially large bags with magnetic straps. Enter Joe Rocket's Rapid Transit Recon 19 tank bag.

An 18.7 liter capacity means it actually holds quite a bit, but its profile — longer than it is wide — makes it look much smaller than it really is. I've been using a Recon 19 on my 1973 BMW R75/5, and it's literally a perfect fit. Most bags I've used tend to be too wide for the BMW's somewhat narrow "Toaster" tank, over-extending at the sides and prone to shifting side-to-side in motion, leaving me forever nudging the bag left or right to keep it centered.

Helping keep the Recon 19 stable are six magnets, one in each of the three flaps and three more sewn into the bottom

of the bag, and once on the tank it's absolutely secure. It's also hugely versatile, with two generously sized waterproof interior side pockets, a wallet-sized waterproof interior pocket, two exterior pockets running the full length of the bag, a small front pocket, two zippered pockets for toll cash, and an exterior pocket

for your cellphone, although it won't hold phones any larger than an iPhone 7 or similar. There's also an access point for headphone cables, a map window, and a built-in rain cover tucked into a small zippered enclosure at the front of the bag. That last bit is pretty cool, made even cooler thanks to a tether on the rain cover so it can't get lost.

The Recon 19 also comes pre-equipped with an inner bag for an optional water bladder (\$21.99), held fast with a hook-and-loop strip running its full length. The Recon 19's double-zippered, dual-closure system — the main top panel opens to the front, with a secondary panel

opening to the rear — gives easy access to the toll pockets and the interior. The zippers, each set pulled with a single strap, seemed clumsy to me at first, but I quickly warmed up to them because the system works. Not too big and not too small, the Recon 19 is just right for daily use. Price: \$94.99. More info: joerocket.com — *Richard Backus*



Keeping a wheel up: Wheel Jockey

For bikes lacking a centerstand, simple maintenance like tire inspection and cleaning and lubing the drive chain can be a real chore. What to do? In the March/April issue, we tried out the SnapJack V2 from Tirox Products (thesnapjack.com). A simple device, it lifts the rear wheel while your bike's on the sidestand, letting it spin free for servicing. We liked it, and looking for other options we landed on the Wheel Jockey.

Designed by veteran motorcycle tour operator Bill Kniegge, the Wheel Jockey was Bill's response to the hassles of prepping and maintaining bikes in his tour fleet, especially out on the road. Simple in design and operation, the Wheel Jockey is really nothing more than a miniature set of rollers. Center the wheel jockey in front (or behind) your bike's rear wheel, then simply push your bike to get the wheel up and centered on the Wheel Jockey.

I was a little skeptical at first, expecting it to be hard to roll my

bike's rear wheel up and over the rollers, but it was surprisingly easy, the process aided by a small pre-roller that steps the wheel up to the main rollers. Your bike only lifts 1-1/2 inches off the ground, so stability during use is very good, and no-slip strips on the bottom plate keep the Wheel Jockey from moving while loading your bike. Quality of construction is excellent, with a stout steel body supporting aluminum rollers riding on sealed ball bearings. Further, its small size makes it easy to throw into a luggage bag so you can take it with you when you tour.

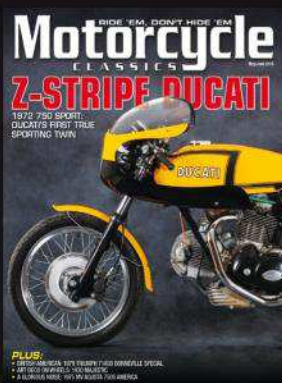
Appreciating that not all bikes are equal, Kniegge offers three versions of the Wheel Jockey: the Big Joc for bikes up to 950 pounds; the Sport for bikes up to 650 pounds; and the Joc Jr. for bikes up to 450 pounds. We

tested the Sport model, which was perfect for the bikes we ride, most of them trending toward the mid-size point on the spectrum. Suggested retail: Joc Jr., \$39; Sport, \$59; Big Joc, \$89. More info: wheeljockey.com — *Richard Backus*



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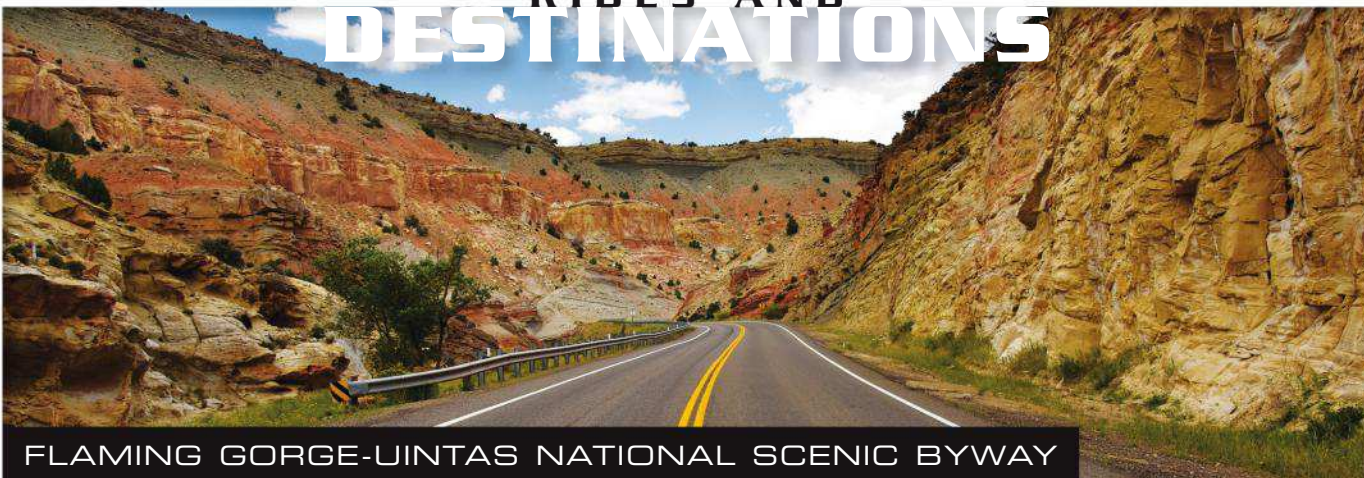
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RIDES AND DESTINATIONS



FLAMING GORGE-UINTAS NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

Dinosaurs. Thunder lizards. Fossils. Prehistoric creatures that disappeared millions of years ago. If you want to retrace their steps and ride where they wandered, it doesn't get any better than Utah's Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway.

Most folks have heard of Dinosaur Diamond Scenic Byway (a 512-mile loop through Colorado and Utah on I-70, US 40, US 191, Utah SR 128, and Colorado SR 139 and SR 64), but our ride is more focused. It's a northern tangent along US 191 called the Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway and it runs between two great destinations: Historic Vernal, Utah, and the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. US 191 runs all the way from Mexico to Canada and I've ridden nearly all of it. It's a glorious road, and the stretch from Vernal to Flaming Gorge is the best part.

Located just south of the Uinta

Mountains, Vernal is one of the few places in Utah not originally settled by Mormons. Brigham Young sent scouts to the region in 1861, but they felt the area didn't have anything to offer other than cactus, snakes, lizards, scorpions and not-particularly-friendly Native Americans. Around that same time, President Lincoln established the Uintah Indian Reservation and Capt. Pardon Dodds (the U.S. government's Indian agent) became the first white settler. A harsh 1879 winter and Colorado's too-close-for-comfort Meeker Massacre discouraged further settlement, but when the Army built a nearby outpost, more settlers followed. Even today, though, the area feels like it is on the edge of civilization.

Vernal's economy is based on mining and tourism, and the tourism is based on fishing, camping, a proud western heritage, the area's natural beauty and dinosaurs. Dinosaur National Monument

is just 20 minutes to the east, and it has the world's largest deposits of Jurassic dinosaur fossils. Back in Vernal, the Utah House of Natural History has life-sized dinosaur replicas. Dinosaur-themed tchotchkes are for sale nearly everywhere. It's funky, but it's cool.

Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area anchors the other end of this great ride. I first visited Flaming Gorge on an earlier Three Flags Rally and I fell in love with the area. Flaming Gorge's lower edge begins 33 miles north of Vernal, and its 90-mile-long lake stretches deeply north into Wyoming. Aptly named Flaming Gorge (designated as such by U.S. Army adventure rider and explorer John Wesley Powell) is bordered by brilliant red canyon walls. Formed by three dams, the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area and its dramatic scenery make for a great destination. The U.S. government added the stretch from Vernal to Flaming Gorge as the Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway in June 1998. It's also called the Drive Through the Ages Geological Tour, and for good reason: It's where dinosaurs lived and our continent became what it is today.

US 191 climbs and winds into the Uinta Mountains through dramatic geological changes. You'll ride through stark rock formations and alpine forests at elevations approaching 10,000 feet, and if that's not interesting enough, there are a series of signs describing the prehistoric creatures that roamed through this area. US 191 runs directly into Flaming Gorge. You can bear right to stay on US 191, go over a dramatic bridge, see one of the dams, and visit the museum at the lake's southern edge, or you can bear left on SR 44 to stay on the Scenic Byway. Both roads lead directly into Wyoming (US 191 on the eastern side of the reservoir, and SR 44 on the western side), and they're equally beautiful, perfect for grand motorcycle touring. — Joe Berk

THE SKINNY

What: The Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway, running from Vernal, Utah, to Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

How to Get There: From the south, grab US 191 anywhere in Utah or Arizona and go north. From the north, grab US 191 anywhere in Montana or Wyoming and head south. You get the idea.

Best Kept Secret: Watch for a sign on the right halfway between Vernal and Flaming Gorge near Red Fleet State Park. A twisty narrow road leads to a 2-1/2-mile hike that takes you to actual dinosaur footprints frozen in stone.

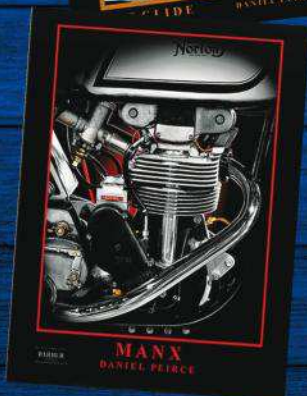
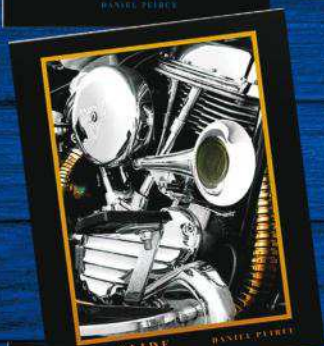
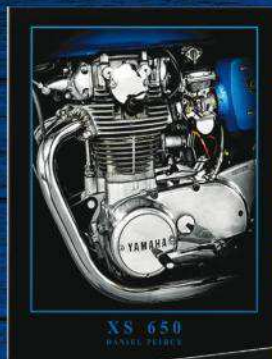
Avoid: The winter months. The weather and the elevation can be tough!

More Photos: californiascooterco.com/blog/?p=26437

More Info: flaminggorgecountry.com/Flaming-Gorge-Uintas-National-Scenic-Byway



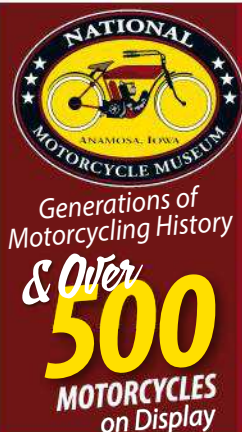
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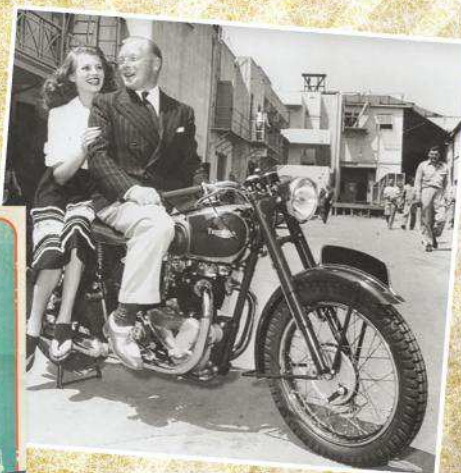
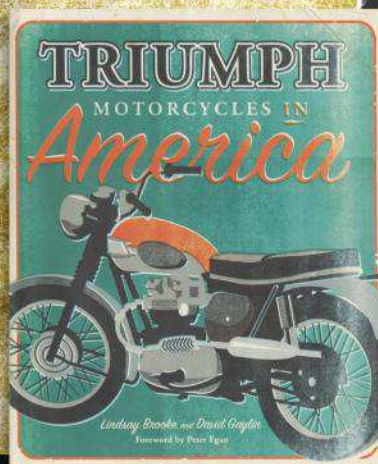
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Don't miss these upcoming events!

7/6 AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days returns to the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio, July 6-8, 2018. Enjoy the AMA Vintage Road Racing Grand Championships along with motocross, hare scrambles, trials and flat track racing. The event includes America's largest motorcycle swap meet, the Wall of Death, bike shows, stunt shows, demo rides, seminars and the *Motorcycle Classics* Vintage Ride and Show on Friday. Join us in the infield starting at 10 a.m. for the show. Then at noon we'll head out for a 50-mile ride on lovely back roads to a lunch spot. After that we'll return to our show grounds for an awards ceremony. More info: MotorcycleClassics.com/vmdride and amavintagemotorcycledays.com

7/13 Visit the New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville, New Jersey, July 13-15, for the 6th Annual AHRMA Vintage Motorcycle Festival. The weekend will feature plenty of vintage motorcycle racing along with 60,000 square feet of parts, bikes, merchandise and more. More info: njmp.com

8/10 Join the editors of *Motorcycle Classics* for the 3rd Annual Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway. We'll enjoy a relaxed weekend of riding and sightseeing in the Laurel Highlands of Pennsylvania, Aug. 10-12. We'll stay at Seven Springs Mountain Resort, meeting up Friday and riding through the weekend. More info: MotorcycleClassics.com/PA2018

8/31 Back for its 13th year, join in the fun at the Bonneville Vintage GP, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, at the Utah Motorsports Campus (formerly the Miller Motorsports Park) in Tooele, Utah. Triples will be the feature of the *Motorcycle Classics* Vintage Motorcycle Show on Saturday, celebrating 50 years since the introduction of the Triumph triple, plus trophies in six classes and a People's Choice award. Sunday will feature a custom bike show. Both days will feature AHRMA racing, along with the CB160 races with LeMans starts both days. More info: bonnevillevintagegp.com

July 6-8 — British Motorcycle Club Owners of Canada 35th Annual Vintage MC Rally and Camp Out. Riondel, British Columbia, Canada. bmoc.ca

July 12-15 — 46th Annual BMW MOA International Rally. Des Moines, IA. bmwmoa.org

July 13-15 — 27th Annual MGNOC Iowa Rally. Elkader, IA. mgnoc.com

July 13-15 — New York Moto Guzzi Rally. Mountain View, NY. mgnoc.com

July 16-19 — INOA Tall Timber Rally. Elma, WA. nortonrally.com/inoa-rally-2018

July 20-22 — 38th Annual British Biker Cooperative Rally & Show. Blue River, WI. britishbiker.net

July 22 — Jeff Williams MC Swap Meet. Kansas City, MO. jwswapmeet.com

Aug. 3-5 — Massachusetts Moto Guzzi Damn Yankee Rally. Heath, MA. mgnoc.com

Aug. 3-5 — 34th Annual Wisconsin Moto Guzzi Riders Rally. Lake Joy Campground, Belmont, WI. wmgr.org

Aug. 3-5 — Ohio Valley BSA Owners Club 37th Annual Rally. Toronto, OH. ohiovalleybsaownersclub.com

Aug. 4 — 6th Annual Kansas City VJMC Midwest Regional Show. New Century, KS. kcvjmc.com

Aug. 16-19 — MGNOC New Mexico State Rally. Datil, NM. mgnoc.com

Aug. 18 — Kansas City All 2-Stroke Rally. Lee's Summit, MO. vjmc.mysite.com

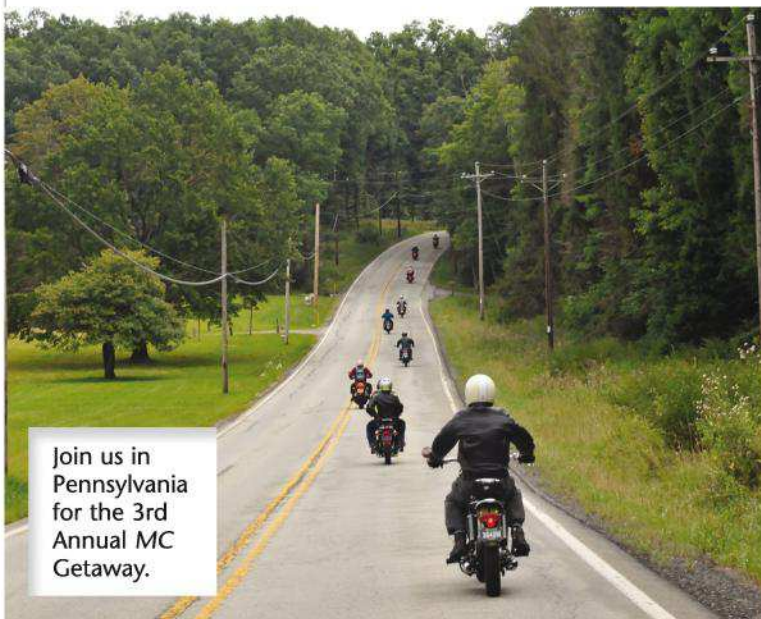
Aug. 19 — British Iron Association of Connecticut 33rd Annual Brit Jam. Haddam Neck, CT. ctbritiron.org

Aug. 24-26 — Ontario Guzzi Riders Rally. Lavigne, Ontario, Canada. mgnoc.com

Aug. 25-30 — Bonneville Motorcycle Speed Trials AMA Land Speed Grand Championship. Wendover, UT. bonneville-speedtrials.com

Aug. 26 — Jeff Williams MC Swap Meet. Kansas City, MO. jwswapmeet.com

Aug. 28-Sept. 1 — GWRRA 40th Annual Wing Ding. Knoxville, TN. gwrro.org



Motorcycle Classics wants to know about classic motorcycle shows, swap meets, road runs and more. Send details of upcoming events at least three months in advance to lhall@motorcycleclassics.com

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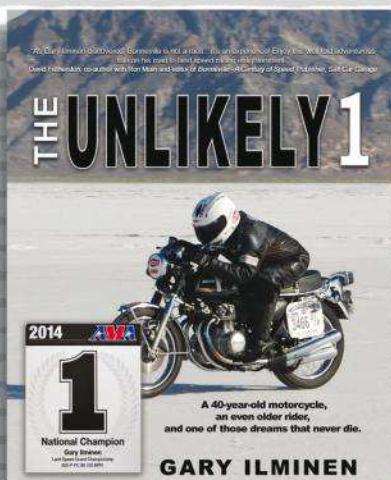
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Gary Ilminem has been a motorcyclist since 1974, and is a freelance photographer and writer who has been published in a number of motorcycle magazines. This second book from Ilminem is filled with color photography, useful information, and interesting anecdotes.

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New Stuff for Old Bikes

From Triumph starter assists to custom wheels for Yamaha XS650s, here are six cool products every classic bike fan should know about.



Touch-screen riding gloves

Hardcore touring riders know that nobody makes serious riding gear like Minnesota-based Aerostich. Among the incredible products in their latest 308-page (!) catalog you'll find their new Touch-Screen Elkskin Ropers gloves. Like the original Ropers, they feature soft but incredibly tough elkskin leather. How tough? Every CHiPs motorcycle cop is issued a pair. As the name suggests, the new Touch-Screen Ropers feature electro-conductive stitching in the finger tips to let you scroll, dial, pinch-zoom, browse or anything else on your smartphone. \$67. More info: aerostich.com



Cool boots

With deep roots in the industry, the folks at Bates Leathers know how to make top-quality leather motorcycle riding gear, including boots. The new Bonneville features a Vibram Christy sole for ultimate durability on and off your bike, and sports extra leather on the toe for shifting. It comes standard with an extra 1/8th-inch insole for extra comfort, along with a standard insole and leather heel. Available with or without the Fast Lane patch on the ankle pad. Stock colors are black and chocolate brown. \$270. More info: batesleathers.com



Triumph starter assist

The British bike experts at The Classic Bike Experience in Essex, Vermont, have announced the development and availability of their KickMagic pneumatic starter for Triumph oil-in-frame models built from 1971 to 1979. Unlike an electric starter conversion, the KickMagic uses high-pressure air and a pneumatic actuator that pulls the kickstarter lever. An electronic control unit guarantees proper operation, and kickback is eliminated because the actuator acts as a buffer. No permanent modifications are required and it can be quickly removed. Look for a full review in a coming issue. \$1,995. More info: kickmagicstarter.com



Baxley Sport Chock

Made in Waverly, Alabama, the patented Baxley Sport Chock was designed to fit the front wheel of sport bikes and standard road bikes with 110-130mm 16- to 19-inch front tires. Powder coated for durability, it has non-skid end caps to keep it from sliding when used in the garage and it's pre-drilled for bolting down to a trailer floor. Just roll the front wheel in and your bike stays in place, with no tie-downs necessary in stationary settings. Available in five colors and comes with a lifetime warranty. \$199. More info: baxleycompanies.com



Bluetooth helmets

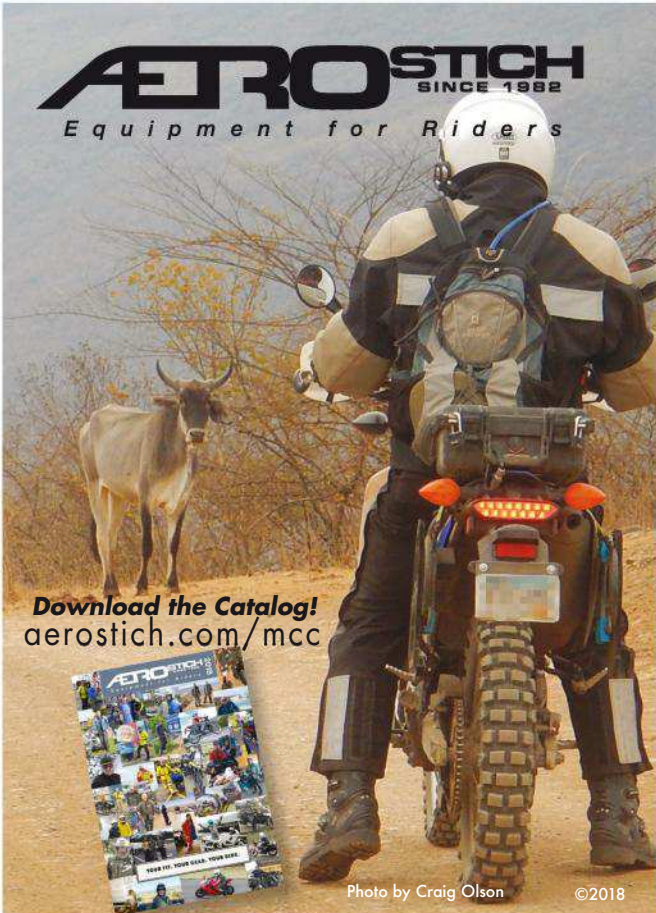
Communications expert SENA recently introduced the first Bluetooth integrated open-faced helmet we know of, the Savage. A built-in intercom system using Bluetooth 4.1 technology lets you connect with up to three other riders, plus listen to music, GPS directions, or take and make phone calls. The Savage comes pre-installed with speakers, a microphone and easy to use controls, with a jog dial and phone button on the left side of the shell. The two-layer shell features a multi-density EPS lining. \$350 (est.). More info: sena.com



Yamaha XS650 spoked wheels

Vintage Japanese parts specialists Revival Parts have created a spoked mod kit for Yamaha XS650s, including models with cast wheels. Made from 6061 aluminum billet, their just-announced rear wheel spoked hub accepts the stock XS650 rear axle, bearing, seals, spacers, drive sprocket and brake rotor. You can pick your rim width and diameter. Allows use of the original Yamaha caliper and stock location. No additional fabrication needed, although 1970-1977 models require a hub spacer. A front hub will also be available. No pricing as of yet. More info: revivalparts.com

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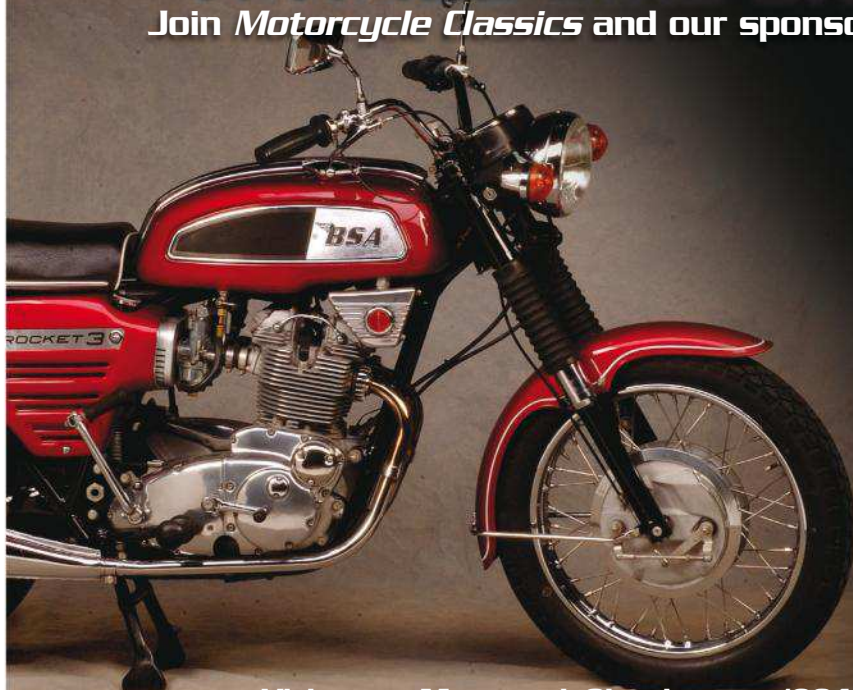
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www.bonnevillevintagegp.com

14th Annual Barber Vintage Festival

Barber Motorsports Park, Birmingham, Alabama
Oct. 5-7, 2018
Featured Marque: Triumph/BSA, spotlight on triples
www.barbermuseum.org

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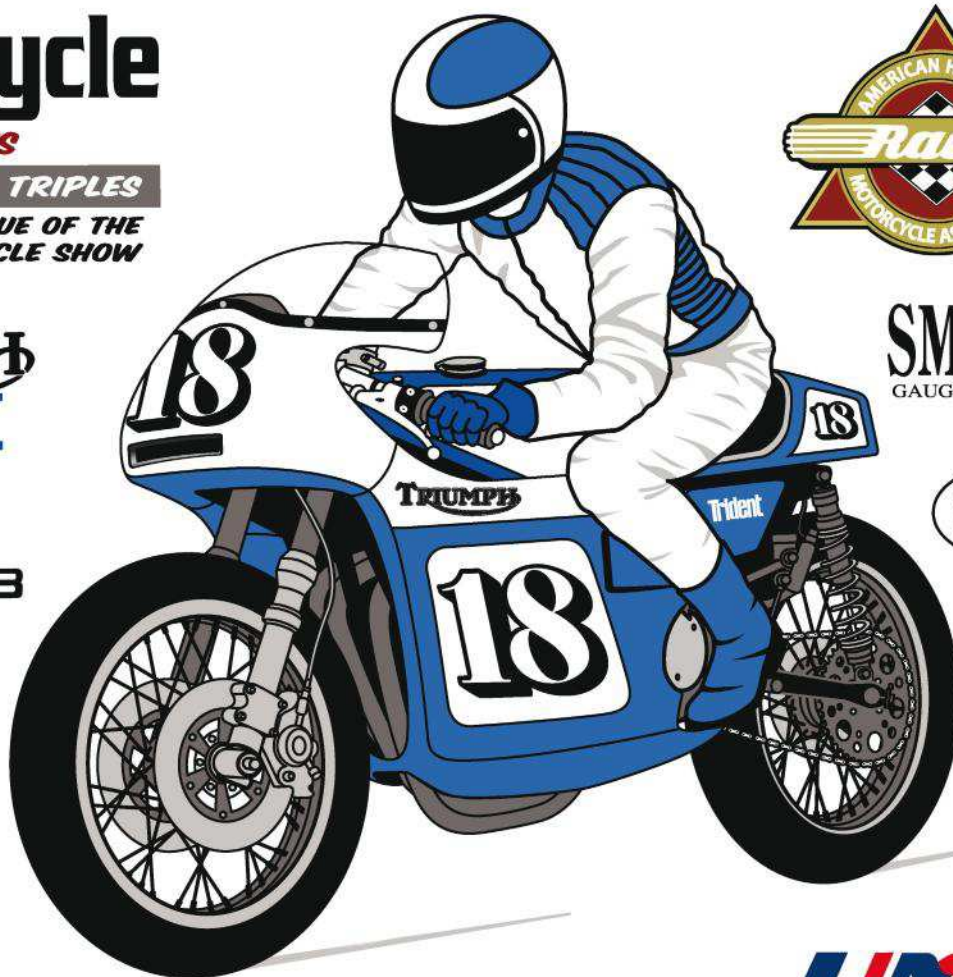
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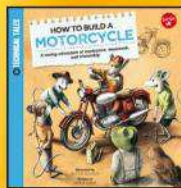


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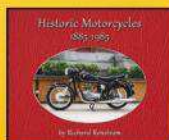
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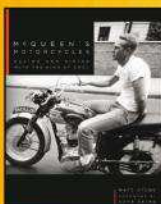
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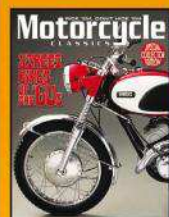
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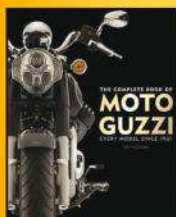
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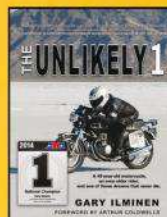
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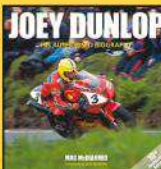
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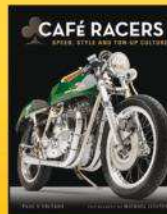
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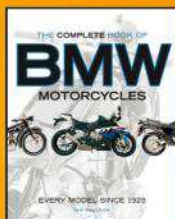
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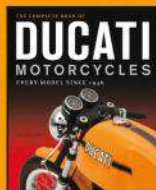
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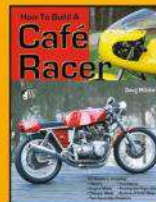
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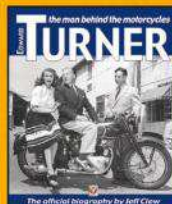
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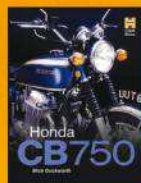
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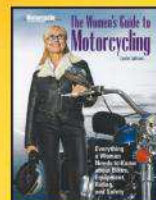
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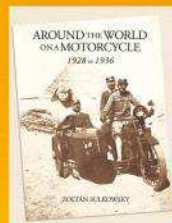
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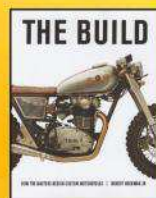
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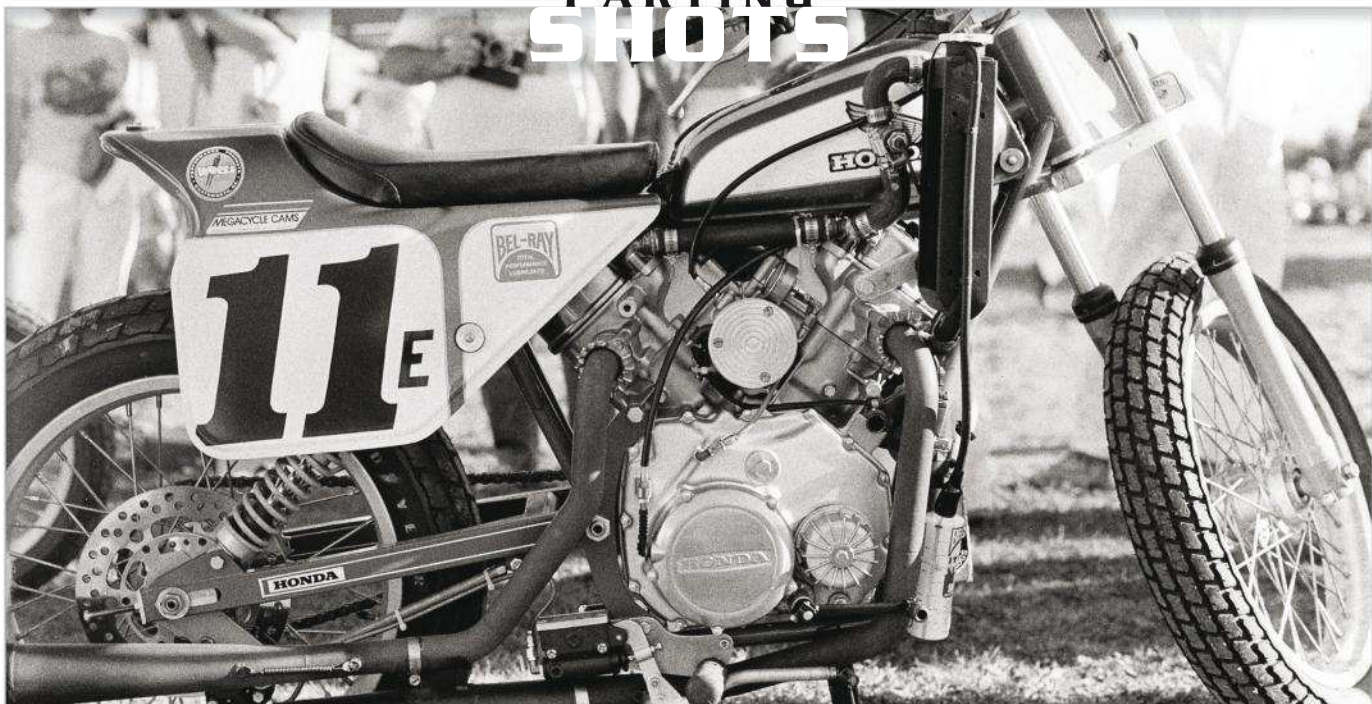
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The CX500-based Honda at the 1981 Ascot Half-Mile. Note the radiator placed up high. *Photos courtesy David Dewhurst.*

Twist of Fate: Honda NS750

The goal was to beat Harley-Davidson at its own flat track game, one the folks in Milwaukee understood well because they'd been playing it for decades. The challenger stepping forward in 1980 was American Honda, and at stake was the most coveted trophy in flat-track racing, the AMA's Grand National Championship, at the time called the Camel Pro Series.

But as the saying goes, before you can run you must first learn to walk, and Honda had a lot of walking to do before their flat track entry eventually made its first run at a Camel Pro Series title in 1984. Actually, the path to victory began with a crawl: Honda was starting with a bike based on the most pedestrian of its street models, the CX500, with its liquid-cooled V-twin engine positioned laterally in the frame. If the David vs. Goliath metaphor comes to mind, join the crowd.

The story began in a nondescript shop in Des Moines, Iowa, where an engineer named Mike Thomas successfully rotated a CX500 engine 90 degrees in a racing frame for flat track racing. Honda eventually hired veteran race mechanic Jerry Griffith to make the little 500cc racer competitive, but with only 50 horsepower it wasn't a threat to Harley's 85-horsepower XR750.

The Honda flat tracker's carburetors were positioned on the left side, splayed front to rear, with the rider's leg resting between them. The exhausts exited from the right, and with the race engine rotated 90 degrees, a chain-and-sprocket final drive replaced the roadster's original drive shaft. The little Honda showed up at various race tracks in 1981, each time getting thoroughly trounced. Mickey

Faye and Jeff Haney were initially tasked with riding the bike, and as the program gained steam, seasoned racers Hank Scott and the late Ted Boody also helped with development.

Griffith and company, with help from speed gurus Jerry Branch, Kenny Augustine and others, found ways to increase displacement approaching the allotted 750cc, but overheating problems persisted. For 1982 Griffith turned the cylinder heads 180 degrees, splaying the carbs out to the right and putting the exhaust on the left, and that bike became known as the NS750. In the hands of hard-charging Scott Pearson it actually won a race, the 1982 Louisville Half-Mile. Griffith credited Pearson for the win, however, citing a one-groove track that worked in Pearson's favor; he essentially mastered the hole-shot to the first turn, charging out front and keeping challengers at bay the entire 25 laps.

Despite the win, Griffith realized they were flogging a tired — and slow — horse. Needing help, he convinced American Honda to hire former GN Champion Gene Romero to run the team, freeing Griffith to develop the engine and chassis, and with help from Honda's vaunted HRC division in Japan, they eventually sired the RS750, an engine with pedigree traceable to a special Paris-Dakar race engine.

Students of AMA flat track racing know that the RS750 proved unstoppable, winning Grand National titles in the hands of Bubba Shobert (four) and the late Ricky Graham (two). And to think that it all started with a simple street engine that today is a collectible among Honda enthusiasts. — *Dain Gingerelli*



Two carburetors splayed front to rear crowded the rider's legs between them.

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